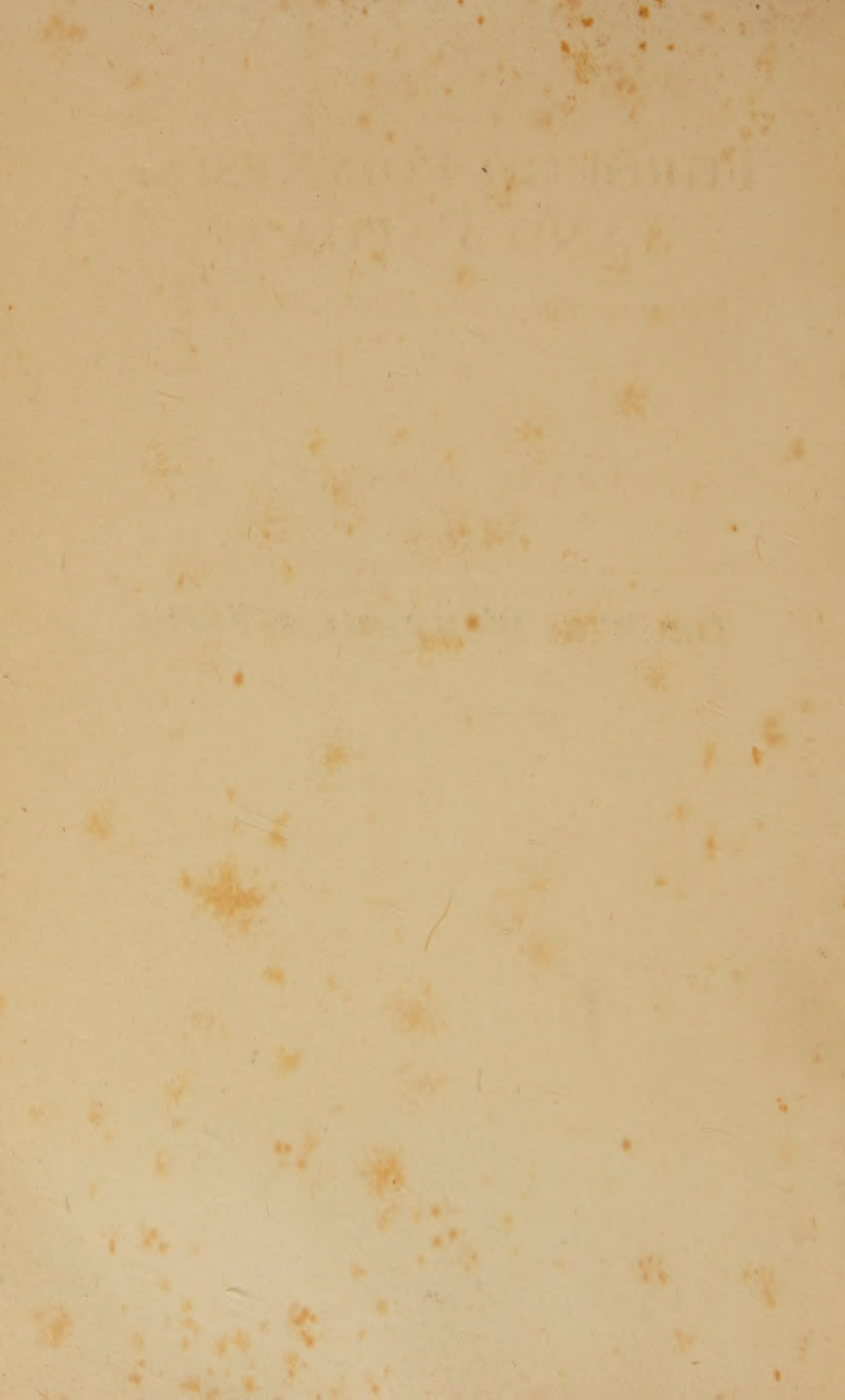




THROUGH POLYNESIA & PAPUA





TAHITIAN WOODLAND NYMPH.

[Frontispiece.]

THROUGH POLYNESIA AND PAPUA

Wanderings with a Camera in Southern Seas

By
FRANK BURNETT

AUTHOR OF
*"Through Tropic Seas," "Ruined Cities of Ceylon," "Exploring
and Fishing in British Columbia."*

ILLUSTRATED

LONDON :
FRANCIS GRIFFITHS,
34 MAIDEN LANE, STRAND, W.C.

1911

To my Wife

Who, as in the past, accompanied me in my wanderings.

INTRODUCTION

IF this volume is received at all favourably it will not be on account of its literary merit.

I claim none for it. The book, notwithstanding, may appeal to those who are interested in a simple narrative of the wanderings of an uneasy spirit through Polynesia and Papua, undertaken primarily as a cure for chronic restlessness, and also with the object of further studying man in a primitive state, as well as of acquiring specimens of his handiwork.

The illustrations are from photographs, which, with a few exceptions, I took myself. They will, perhaps, be considered as not the least attractive feature of the book.

My views and opinions upon the Missionary question may not, in some quarters, be received with approval. They are, however, the results of years of investigation and close study of a subject which I approached with an impartial and unprejudiced mind. I have also the satisfaction of knowing, for a certainty, that my conclusions in the matter are those of a great majority of Government Officials, resident traders, and those travellers who have visited the islands, and have given the subject their attention.

The state of affairs on the Solomon Islands, in respect to their government, is such that a sense of duty has compelled me to condemn it. This I regret, the more so for the reason that the political conditions there are in marked contrast to those existing in the other portions of Britain's vast dominions, which I have visited in my many wanderings, and where I have invariably found evidences of that wonderful genius possessed by the Anglo-Saxon people for bearing the

“white man’s burden” in the interests of those subject races whose territories, for one reason or another, we have been compelled to annex or bring under the protection of the Crown.

To Mr. Tati Salmon, the Chief of Papara in Tahiti, and a member of the Polynesian Society, I am indebted for considerable information in respect to early Tahitian history, and also regarding the long voyages of discovery made in the face of remarkable difficulties by the Polynesian Vikings of the Southern Seas.

FRANK BURNETT.

Vancouver, B.C., May, 1911.

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TAHITIAN GIRL.

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DAUGHTERS OF CHIEF OF VARIEA, TAHITI.

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TAHITIAN BELLE.

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TAHITIAN GIRL.

(Facing page 1.)

THROUGH POLYNESIA AND PAPUA

CHAPTER I

SAN FRANCISCO TO SOCIETY ISLANDS—LIFE ON BOARD
“ MARIPOSA ”—ARRIVE AT PAPEETE

A VISIT to the South Sea Islands has a peculiarly fascinating effect upon the average European. The glamour of the life there takes complete possession of him. It may for a time remain hidden, but, assuredly, sooner or later, it will come to light and impel the afflicted again to desert the “ busy haunts of men ” and turn his foot-steps towards :

“ The Summer Isles of Eden lying

In dark purple spheres of Sea.”⁽¹⁾

Consequently, I quite realised, upon my return from a yachting cruise amongst the Line Islands—an account of which may be found in “ Through Tropic Seas ”*—that it was merely a matter of time before I should again betake myself to the Islands of the Blest. It did not, therefore, come as any surprise to me to find myself, in the fall of 1909, suffering from so severe an attack of “ wander fever,” that no remedy seemed left to me but again to

“ Burst all links of habit and to wander far away

On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.”⁽¹⁾

(1) Tennyson's “ Locksley Hall.”

* “ Through Tropic Seas,” by Frank Burnett; illustrated; price 7/6 net. London: Francis Griffiths.

2 THROUGH POLYNESIA AND PAPUA

Accordingly, without any delay, passages were booked for my wife and self in the "Mariposa," bound from San Francisco to Tahiti and Raratonga, where, by a few months residence on those islands, a partial cure could be effected. From these groups the Solomon Islands were accessible by way of Sydney. I had long been anxious to visit the latter, for the reason that the natives there are about the only Aborigines remaining in the Pacific who have not yet been affected by the so-called advantages of our Western civilisation, and are therefore living to a great extent under primitive conditions, notwithstanding that the group has been a British protectorate for the last twenty years.

My experiences amongst the inhabitants of these interesting lands constitute the *raison d'être* of this book, and are set forth in the following pages.

Life on board ship, even on a short voyage, with a large company of passengers and under very favourable conditions, is, at the best, a comparatively miserable existence. The twelve days spent on the "Mariposa," from San Francisco to Tahiti, with about only forty fellow *voyageurs* formed no exception to that common experience. Continuous rubbers of bridge for small stakes was the principal dissipation indulged in. Even this way of passing the time would have become monotonous eventually had not an energetic American persisted in organising tournaments, and persuading people to participate in them, who were absolutely guiltless of a knowledge of the most elementary rules of the game. With a partner of this character, it goes without saying the play lost its monotony, and at times, by reason of its peculiarity, became even fascinating.

Of course there is always considerable diversion to be enjoyed by a student of human nature in the smoking room of a passenger steamer bound to the

Southern Hemisphere, where the characteristics and peculiar idiosyncracies of the representatives of different nationalities are betrayed in a marked degree.

For instance, there is the type of ultra-conservative Englishman, who, when introduced, will insist upon shaking hands on a level with his head, quite ignoring the obvious danger he incurs of dislocating thereby the other man's arm. Moreover, though in all probability a very decent fellow at heart, it will take ages for a stranger to discover that fact, on account of the practically impenetrable armour of reserve in which he is accustomed to encase himself, excepting when in the company of intimate friends. His antipodes is the loquacious and ever restless American, with the perennial half-smoked cigar in his mouth. He does not stand upon ceremony, but promptly introduces himself at the first opportunity, and immediately informs you what part of the great republic has the honour of being his birthplace, also that his ancestors came over from England in the "Mayflower." Verily that vessel must have had a wonderful capacity, to have accommodated the ancestors of about half the American nation. He then becomes confidential, and enlightens you as to his line of business—how much he makes a year, what his clothes cost, and, if married, the number of young Americans he is responsible for. In fact there is scarcely anything, even of the most private nature, concerning himself, that he will not confide to a willing listener. But, on the other-hand, reciprocity in this respect is invariably insisted upon. When he has finished enlightening one concerning his own affairs, a close cross-examination of his companion is at once commenced, and it is utterly beyond his ability to appreciate the reasons for any unwillingness on the part of the interrogated to answer questions regarding matters that are usually considered, by normal people, to be of a private character.

It is very amusing to watch the proceedings when these two diametrically opposed types—the abnormally reserved Englishman and the talkative unconventional American—happen to meet one another. The former, with studied politeness, endeavours to conceal his evident lack of interest in the recital of the latter's private affairs. The climax, however, is reached when questions are propounded to him by the stranger of such a nature that they would in all probability be resented if coming from even an intimate friend. The expression that comes over the Englishman's face is a picture. Surprise, resentment, consternation, are in turn depicted, shewing unmistakably his conclusion that the American must be bordering on lunacy. As for the latter, he is at a complete loss to account for what appears to him the extraordinary change that has suddenly taken place in the conduct of his companion.

Then there is the ubiquitous Scotchman, who, apparently by instinct, experiences no trouble in hunting up and becoming acquainted with a fellow dweller from North of the Tweed. Over sundry liquid refreshments, in a snug corner of the smoking room, are discussed the respective merits of all the different brands of that unique decoction, which, to their immense financial benefit, these North Britons have inflicted upon the civilised portion of the human race. I refer to the liquid commonly described as "Scotch whisky."

When tired of this very exhilarating subject, the conversation—carried on in an unknown tongue, by courtesy designated English—invariably turns to golf; a game invented by the Scotch, and well suited to the national characteristics. Its attractions are a complete mystery to any sane man, who is quite unable to discover what pleasure there can be in attempting to perform the almost impossible feat of putting a



CORAL CAVE NEAR PAPEETE, TAHITI.



SURF BREAKING ON REEF, TAHITI.

[Facing page 4.]



BRITISH CONSULATE, PAPEETE, TAHITI.



TAHITIAN HUT.



AVENUE IN PAPEETE.

small ball into a hole situated some hundreds of yards distant, with the aid of freakily shaped clubs. On the principle, I presume, that, by a miracle, such an unlikely event might happen, in the vicinity of the receptacles are constructed artificial obstacles all over what are called "the links." This term I regard only as the Scotch for an area of land upon which people "with a bee in their bonnet" love to amuse themselves.

In all probability, one will also meet representatives of Britain's greater Colonies—the breezy optimist from Canada, and the pleasure-loving Australasian; the former ever enthusiastic over his land of magnificent distances, and quite satisfied that the time is not far off when his wonderful country will be peopled by so many millions that the republic to the South will gladly welcome annexation to Britain's Empire, the greatest the world has ever seen.

The frequenter of the smoking room, however, whose company, to my mind, is most enjoyable, is the Pacific trader homeward bound to his sea-girt isle, after a trip to civilisation. He is always prepared to indulge in reminiscences of a very interesting nature, with respect to his early experiences, when life amongst the Polynesians was not characterised by the immunity from danger that exists at the present day.

But, notwithstanding all the mild dissipations I have indicated, everyone was becoming pretty tired of his neighbours' company by the time the mountains of Tahiti were sighted, on a fine, bright morning of the twelfth day out from San Francisco. A few hours afterwards the good ship "Mariposa" steamed through the barrier reef into the lagoon, and in a short time was safely moored alongside the wharf at Papeete.

CHAPTER II

THE SOCIETY ISLANDS

TAHITI—DISCOVERY OF—MUTINY OF THE “BOUNTY”— FLORA—FAUNA—CLIMATE

TAHITI, “the Gem of the Pacific,” “the Isle of the Blest,” truly presents an enchanting scene to the visitor, well repaying him for the *ennui* incidental to a twelve days’ voyage over the several thousand miles of trackless and lonely ocean separating the island from San Francisco.

Viewed from the deck of the vessel, no fairer landscape picture could be imagined. Upon the mighty barrier reef—the result of the labour of countless generations of the marvellous, indefatigable coral polyp—the mighty Pacific rollers breaking with inconceivable fury, transform themselves into a yeasty spray that can be seen at a distance of many miles. Between this natural barrier and the coral strand of the island shore, is a lagoon whose waters, coloured with almost every shade of green, are placid as the surface of a mirror. In the centre of this land-locked harbour may be discerned, through the curtain of spray, a beautiful little islet covered down to the water’s edge with tropical verdure placed there in the long ago—so tradition avers—by the ancient gods as an habitation for the particular deity who at that time controlled the destinies of all things marine. If so, he certainly had an ideal abode. Away in the background is Papeete, embowered in vegetation

and decked with flowers of undescribable splendour. Above towers in stately grandeur a range of mountains carved by ages of erosion into most fantastic shapes, culminating in one that, on account of its graceful, though peculiar, contour, has been aptly named the "Diadem." Rivers of crystal clearness flow down the valleys, of which the boundaries, in most places; are sheer precipices cut out of the mountain sides, while, upon the low lying lands bordering these streams, are to be found tropical fruits of every description growing wild in the greatest profusion.

Such is the scene that meets the gaze of the visitor to Tahiti; but it is absolutely impossible for me adequately to portray it, or in a pen picture to do justice to beauties, which, failing a visit to them, call for the brush of the artist. Other and more capable writers have attempted the description and failed.

The Society Islands, one of the most important groups in the Pacific, were discovered by the famous Spanish navigator, Quiros, in 1606, but little was known of them until they were visited by Captain Wallis, commanding H.M. ship "Dolphin," in 1767, who considered Tahiti to be a newly discovered territory, and called it King George Island.

On April of the succeeding year De Bougainville called at the island in the French frigate "Boudeuse," and christened it "Nouvelle Cythère."

The next European to visit Tahiti was Captain Cook, who made the world more intimately acquainted with the group and its inhabitants. In order that the transit of Venus across the sun's disc should be observed from places as far apart as possible, the British Government dispatched the "Endeavour," with Cook in command, accompanied by an efficient staff of astronomers, to take the necessary observations. They arrived on April 12th, 1769, and three days later the transit was observed at a spot now known as Venus

Point, some fifteen miles north of Papeete. Cook subsequently surveyed the Chief Island Otaheiti (Tahiti), and, in honour of the Royal Astronomical Society, gave the group the name it has since borne—the Society Islands.

Between 1772 and 1774 the Spaniards again made repeated visits, with the view of colonisation ; but their efforts in that direction met with practically no success.

In 1779 an event occurred which brought the group into considerable prominence. Prior to this date it had been shewn to the British authorities that, unless something was done to increase the food supplies required for the maintenance of the African slaves employed on the West Indian sugar plantations, that industry would be seriously crippled. The Government therefore decided to dispatch H.M. ship "Bounty" to Tahiti for the purpose of transporting bread-fruit trees to Jamaica, and the adjacent West Indian Islands. The vessel was placed in charge of Lieutenant Bligh, a man of irascible temper, autocratic and tyrannical ; in fact, absolutely unfitted to command any body of men. His subsequent career amply proved this. Wherever he went disorder ensued.

The "Bounty" arrived at Tahiti in October, 1788, and remained there six months collecting trees. During this time the crew, of necessity, mixed freely with the charming and hospitable islanders, and, consequently, when sailing time arrived, were in no pleasant mood at the thought of parting with the fascinating Tahitian damsels. It is not probable, however, there would have been any trouble if Captain Bligh had treated his ship's company in a reasonable manner. His behaviour, on the contrary, was so manifestly unjust that it had the effect of fanning into flame the glowing sparks of discontent. On the 28th of April, 1789, the majority of the crew, headed by

Lieutenant Christian, broke out into open mutiny, and took charge of the vessel. They then set Captain Bligh, with eighteen others, adrift in an open launch, 23 feet long, in which, after 72 days of terrible hardship and suffering, they eventually reached Timor, a distance of over 3,000 miles.

The mutineers then returned to Tubai with the intention of remaining there, but, on account of differences with the natives, they were obliged to leave that island. They thereupon proceeded to Tahiti, where dissensions arose as to their future movements, the majority being exceedingly loth to break away from the allurements of the Tahitian female society. Christian, accompanied by those of the mutineers who remained loyal to him, together with a few island men and women, put out to sea, sailing eastward until the uninhabited Pitcairn Island was reached, where the "Bounty" was run ashore and burned.

Nothing was known of their fate for many years, until, in 1808, Captain Folger touched at Pitcairn to obtain water and seals. From the accounts given by its discoverer, Captain Cateret, he had supposed the island to be uninhabited, and was therefore very much astounded to find it occupied by John Adams, the sole survivor of the mutineers of the "Bounty," together with the half-caste descendants of Christian and his companions, by their Tahitian wives.

Subsequently, Captain Edwards of the "Pandora," arrived at Tahiti in search of the mutineers, where he found and arrested fourteen of those that had remained behind when the "Bounty" sailed away.

The next visitor of any importance was Vancouver, who called at the group in 1791. Six years later the London Missionary Society's ship "Duff" landed at Tahiti the pioneer missionaries to the South Sea Islands.

For over twenty years, however, Christianity made very little impression upon the Islanders—none, in fact, until the missionaries succeeded in converting a few of the principal chiefs, when the population *en masse* renounced Paganism.

Shortly afterwards one of these chiefs, Pomare, of the Papenoo district in Tahiti, a missionary *protégé*, acquired marked ascendancy, through missionary influence, and was eventually declared King of the group. He was followed by a son and grandson, Pomare II. and III. respectively, whose reigns were of comparatively short duration. They were succeeded by the celebrated Queen Pomare IV., who ruled the islands for many years, dying in 1877, when her son, the last of the kings, came to the throne. He was deposed in 1880 by the French, who, thereupon, took possession of the group, together with the Paumotos, or Low Archipelago, in the name of the King of France. Since that date the islands have remained a French Dependency.

They divided into two groups, the windward and the leeward, both being between latitudes 15 and 18 degrees South of the Equator. With the exception of a few attols, the islands are of a high, volcanic, mountainous formation, intersected with deep valleys, down which flow torrential streams. Along the coast-line are considerable areas of level land formed by the deposit of “*débris*,” the result of ages of erosion. These level areas, together with the valleys, constitute the inhabitable portions of the islands. The former are protected from sea encroachment by barrier reef formations, generally at some distance from the shore, within the shelter of which vessels of moderate tonnage are afforded safe anchorage.

The climate, though warm and humid, varies considerably between summer and winter, on account of the islands being well to the south of the Equator.

Fever and tropical diseases are rare. On the whole the group is well adapted for residence by Europeans, besides being an ideal winter resort for the dweller in the North.

Although the neighbouring Paumotu Archipelago is frequently devastated by cyclones, Tahiti is rarely visited by winds of hurricane force, no doubt because the high mountains divert these storms either to the north or south.

The inhabitants, one of the finest types of the Polynesian race, are renowned for their grand physique. They are of a light brown colour, with fine features and an abundance of straight, long, black hair. The females of the higher class are, in some instances, almost as fair as those of Southern Europe. In disposition the Tahitian is kind and hospitable, always merry, and fond to excess of dancing and singing. No wonder Lieutenant Christian and his fellow mutineers succumbed to the charms of the island damsels, together with the allurements of Tahitian life, and were loth to leave what must have appeared to them a veritable earthly Paradise.

Throughout the Society Islands grow, in the greatest profusion, all kinds of tropical products, such as cotton, cocoanuts—from which copra is made—coffee, sugar, vanilla, and rice. The bread fruit and a large red plantain are staple foods, while the orange, mango, and banana grow practically wild. Many kinds of European vegetables also do well.

Horses of a small but wonderfully hardy breed are common, and can be obtained at a reasonable price. Sheep, goats, pigs, and poultry are abundant.

The pests consist principally of centipedes, scorpions, mosquitoes, and rats; the latter being of the common Norway type. They were introduced some years ago by vessels calling at the islands, and, conditions being favourable to their propagation, they have increased

wonderfully ; to such an extent, in fact, that they constitute a serious problem for the copra planter to solve. They have become arboreal in their habits, in order to reach the young cocoanuts which form their principal food. Their depredations, in that respect, have become so great, that, unless some means is discovered of exterminating them, the production of copra will be impossible in the future.



VILLAGE OF TAUTIERA, TAHITI.



FISH TRAPS, TAHITI.

[Facing page 12.]



TAHITIAN SCENE.



TAHITIAN SHORE SCENE.

[Facing page 13.]

CHAPTER III

PAPEETE—DESCRIPTION OF—PECULIARITY OF CHURCH SERVICES—THE ADAMITE SECT

As soon as the " Mariposa " was safely moored alongside the wharf, we proceeded ashore, where a hearty welcome was extended to us from the kindly and hospitable Tahitians. Though we were complete strangers, every one passed a pleasant greeting to the new arrivals.

The visit of the monthly steamer is an event looked forward to. Practically all business is suspended on " due-day," and, judging from the numbers that crowded the wharf, one might easily have imagined that the population of Papeete had turned out *en masse* to see the vessel arrive. What a pretty sight they presented, viewed from the steamer's deck! Stalwart men, but principally women, and girls of all ages, than whom there are no finer specimens of the *genus homo*. The female portion were clothed in peculiar island garb of loose flowing robes of almost every colour, with their long, dark tresses hanging down upon the shoulders, setting off to perfection their olive-brown complexions, and bewitching black eyes, which latter they are not at all backward in using—often with disastrous effect—upon a new arrival of the opposite sex.

After our baggage had passed the customs, in respect to which the French authorities gave absolutely no trouble, we at once drove to the very comfortable Tiara Hotel, conducted by Mrs. Chapman, assisted

by her two charming daughters. She is known to everyone as Lovina, by which Christian name we very soon became accustomed to address her.

The hostelry is run in the French style, and in a most unconventional manner. It consists principally of a wide verandah under which all meals are served. Strange fish, and the everlasting chicken and fruit, are the staple dishes ; but if a guest wants anything in particular, he has only to intimate his desire to Lovina, and she will procure it if possible. Moreover, should the eggs be not cooked to one's taste, or the tea not of a proper strength, no resentment is betrayed by the Tahitian cook in the event of the dissatisfied one invading his "sanctum" for the purpose of superintending the boiling of another lot of eggs, or the brewing of a fresh pot of tea. As for the genial hostess, she simply laughs in her hearty way at what without doubt would be considered an unwarrantable liberty on the part of a hotel guest in any other country but Tahiti. Lovina never tires of telling those staying at her house to make themselves at home, and they certainly do so with a vengeance. I proposed that the name of the hotel should be changed to Liberty Hall, which suggestion she promised to seriously consider.

Upon the Sunday after our arrival I attended service at the large, solidly-built Native Church—one of the oldest in the Pacific Islands. On my way thither, every street corner was thronged with Tahitian men and boys, playing pitch and toss for coppers. I was not, therefore, at all surprised to find the congregation made up, to the extent of ninety per cent., of women and young girls. The fact is that missionary influence has entered upon a rapid decline throughout the Eastern Pacific, at any rate so far as the male portion of the community is concerned.

This may be ascribed to two causes. In the first place the brand of Christianity introduced by the

missionaries into these islands was of such a morose, Calvinistic character—a mixture of brimstone and hell fire—that it tended to, and did restrain all the healthy, natural impulses of the cheerful and pleasure-loving Polynesian. Such a state of affairs, in any community, could exist only for a limited period. Nature was bound eventually to reassert herself, and this is what is now taking place in the older missionary fields of the Pacific. Moreover, in the second place, contempt for the missionary and his methods, and scepticism concerning the religion he teaches—an attitude which the vast majority of European residents, of all classes, throughout Oceanica, do not even attempt to conceal, must be presumed to have had an immense influence upon the native mind, especially when it is taken into consideration that the Polynesian dearly loves to imitate his white brethren. Whether the missionary will ever regain his lost influence over the Islander is a difficult question to answer, though, for my part, I consider it very doubtful.

A French Huguenot presided over the service, which was certainly conducted in a most unique manner. After giving out a few notices, he delivered an extempore prayer. At its conclusion, a number of young girls sang a hymn in Tahitian, the rest of the congregation taking no part in it. When they had finished, a group at the rear of the church started up another. They were in turn followed by a number of elderly matrons occupying a pew near where I sat, and this procedure was continued until, apparently, all present had been afforded an opportunity of exercising their vocal powers. There did not appear to be any system or prearranged programme. As far as I could judge, it depended entirely upon which group, so to speak, first secured the floor.

The Tahitian has the characteristic soft voice of his race. They are noted amongst Polynesians for their

singing, a distinction which, judging from that Sunday morning performance, is well deserved. I enjoyed it immensely, though the hymns, of course, were in a language unknown to me. There is one peculiarity about their singing, common to most South Sea Islanders. Instead of tapering off the last word in a verse, they—the men especially—stop with a sudden jerk, as though at that particular moment, some one had come behind and given each singer a vigorous slap on the back. Until one becomes accustomed to it the effect produced is, to say the least of it, peculiar.

Most of the Christian denominations are represented in Tahiti, and the island has also the doubtful honour of being the home of, perhaps, the most freakish sect in existence. They are known as the Adamites, whose founder and high priest is one Dowling, an American. He is an educated man, a graduate from a Californian college.

Their tenets of belief are :

FIRST.—That every one, of both sexes, should discard all clothing, and go in the garb of Eden, without even the proverbial fig leaf.

SECOND.—That doctors are all fakirs, and that, consequently, the taking of any kind of medicine should be "tabooed." That all drugs are harmful. (Many people will agree, to some extent, with this second proposition.)

THIRD.—That man should confine himself to a purely vegetarian diet.

FOURTH.—That he should not waste his time in speculations concerning a future state, for the reason that it is quite impossible for him to solve any such problem.

FIFTH.—That Socialism means perfect happiness to all classes of humanity.

Dowling started his cult in California ; but the straight-laced people of the highly moral city of San



TAHITIANS CELEBRATING XMAS WITH FRENCH SAILORS.

[Facing page 16.]



TAHITIAN BEAUTY.

[Facing page 17.]

Francisco, where he first proposed taking up his abode, would not tolerate his opinions on the dress question. He then tried Honolulu, but was compelled to shake the dust of that righteous place from off his feet. Raratonga was next favoured. The people of that island, however, would have none of him. From there he drifted to Tahiti, where he was allowed by the French authorities to secure quite a considerable tract of land away up on the side of a mountain behind Papeete, on condition that he and his disciples donned at least a pair of trousers when visiting the town.

In response to an invitation, I, accompanied by Mr. Rowley, the British Consul, together with a friend, left Papeete one morning at break of day, on a visit to their aerie. It needed over two hours of hard climbing to get up there, the trail, in some places, being almost perpendicular. Yet Dowling and his followers conveyed upon their backs up this terrible road, under a tropical sun, all the material with which their buildings are erected, as well as the working implements used by them in their farming operations—truly a Herculean task.

Quite an extensive area has been cleared, and tropical fruit trees of every description planted. They have also dammed a small stream that runs through the property, thereby creating a fine swimming bath in which we were glad to plunge after the arduous labour involved in climbing the mountain. After our bath Dowling hospitably treated us to quite an original lunch, composed entirely of various fruitarian dishes.

The High Priest himself is a very intelligent man—well read on most subjects, and an entertaining conversationalist when “switched off” his particular fads. He and his disciples live in absolute nakedness, and apparently are not ashamed; yet his visitors experienced a peculiar feeling on sitting down to a table presided over by a naked white man. I might

state that our host bears a marked resemblance to the Christ, as depicted by the early masters. He appeared to be very pleased when I told him so.

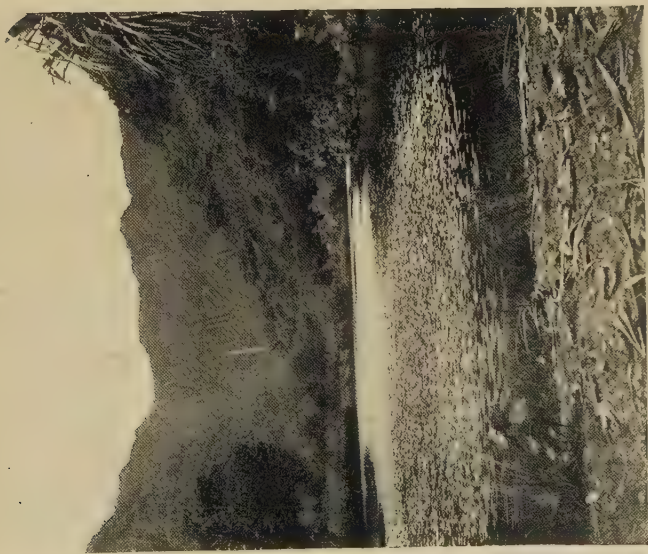
In answer to a query whether it was ever purposed to allow women to join the community, he intimated that such was their intention. If they ever do, the drama enacted in the Garden of Eden will in all probability be repeated, and the later Adamite family will suffer the fate of the earlier one.

The return journey was almost as trying as the ascent. However, we eventually reached Lovina's without any mishap to our tired limbs, having spent a very enjoyable day. I was fortunate enough to secure a very fair photograph here reproduced of Dowling and his disciples in the garb in which they first saw the light of day.



EASTERN ISLAND SCULPTURE.

[Facing page 18.]



TAHITIAN SCENERY, WATERFALL IN
THE DISTANCE.



TAHITIAN GIRL BATHING.



GRANDDAUGHTER OF CHIEF OF
IVARIEA, TAHITI.

CHAPTER IV

ROUND TAHITI—NATIVE PROCRASTINATION—ABSENCE OF BIRD LIFE—NATIVE DANCING

THE drives round Papeete are numerous and very beautiful, the finest, perhaps, being that up the Fautana Valley.

A good road branches off the main highway at about two miles from the town, and runs for some distance through a grand avenue of giant acacia trees planted by the late queen. The red berries from these trees, strung together by the natives, make very attractive necklaces. After leaving the avenue, the tortuous windings of the river are followed past rapids and beautiful waterfalls interspersed with silent pools, the home of a species of fish called by the islanders "mountain trout." Vegetation of the rankest character, and of tropical beauty, is seen on every side. almost every tree and shrub being arrayed in a garb of the brightest green, relieved by flowers of all shades of colour. At the termination of the road is the principal waterfall, from which there is a fine view of the Diadem pinnacle, one of the mountain sights of the island.

To see Tahiti thoroughly one should drive completely round the island. This is a somewhat arduous undertaking during the wet season, and we were strongly advised by our friends not to attempt it; but, upon being informed that the only difficulties likely to be encountered were the crossing of swollen rivers, it was decided to run the risk. We at once commenced, therefore, to make the necessary arrange-

ments for the 120 mile journey.

By this time, to our sorrow, the peculiar traits of character that dominate the actions of both the European and Tahitian inhabitants had become well known to us, and we were accordingly quite prepared for failure to induce anyone, by known means, to do anything at once, if its performance could be postponed, on any pretext whatever, until a future date. They are apparently imbued with an abiding hope that some one may turn up, or that some contingency may in the meantime arise, that will relieve them of the execution of an unpleasant task within the allotted time. Consequently, in order to circumvent them, it was intimated to one of those concerned that a start was to be made, without any peradventure whatever, early on a particular Wednesday; whereas, on the contrary, we had not any intention of leaving until the following Sunday. No disappointment was therefore experienced by us when one complete week elapsed before, after Herculean exertions on our part, the equipage that was to carry us round the island drove up to the hotel, in great style and with a grand flourish of trumpets.

The accompanying photograph will give a fair idea of the outward or superficial appearance of the conveyance, but not of its terrible discomforts when negotiating a rough stretch of road. The box was attached to the axle by four pieces of band metal, which were no doubt intended to act the part of springs at some remote period, back in the distant ages, when the "democrat" was in an early state of its existence. It may fairly be assumed that they did, at that time, perform that function in a reasonably satisfactory manner. What interested us, however, was the fact that they now merely formed a connecting link between the running gear and that portion of the machine upon which it was intended we should



HIGH PRIEST DOWLING BATHING.



THE ADAMITES HIGH PRIEST AND HIS DISCIPLES:

(Facing page 20.)



TAHITIAN GIRL AND CHIEF'S CHILD.

[Facing page 21.]

be seated. We were, therefore, not surprised, upon the wheels of this ancient conveyance striking a hole or coming in contact with a boulder in the bed of a river, to experience a sensation as though the terminations of our vertebræ were being violently forced up through neck and head.

Moreover, the canopy, which no doubt looks very grand in the photograph, had seen too many lights of better days, was, in fact, a delusion and a snare. In place of sheltering us, as intended, from the frequent tropical downpours, it merely acted as a very successful funnel through which the rain was conveyed principally upon the crowns of our devoted heads, and there to the rest of our persons, thereby inflicting an impromptu shower bath several times a day.

To this wonderful rig-out was attached, by harness composed chiefly of rope, a pair of mules, one about $13\frac{1}{2}$ hands high and the other not much larger than an ordinary-sized donkey.

Over all there lorded supreme a native boy whose name was Aufu. He had a smile "childlike and bland," which belied his true character. He spoke Tahitian, swore in French, and understood English not at all. His ignorance of this latter tongue proved a serious handicap on several occasions when the strongest imprecations in Tahitian and French had failed lamentably to induce our team to make an extra effort to extricate us from a tight place. Fortunately, however, I, who sat next to him, was always capable of rising to the occasion, and ready to come to his rescue. Upon being faced with such a quandary, Aufu would appealingly look to me for support, and the lurid Anglo-Saxon expletives which followed invariably had a most gratifying effect upon our noble Arabs. I presume that to the novelty of the expressions the working of the oracle was due, just as, when every other method had failed, Daniel O'Connell was enabled

to silence the Dublin fishwife by applying to her the epithets of hypothermose and parallelogram.

As soon as everything was ready for a start, we were favoured with the grandest display of pyrotechnics I have ever witnessed in the form of a tropical thunderstorm. The downpour caused a few hours delay, to the evident delight of our native Jehu. With scarcely any warning, masses of pitchy cloud came rolling over the mountain tops, emitting lurid lightnings, not in flashes, but in a continuous stream of fire, while peals of crashing thunder shook the hotel to its very foundations. As for the rain the fountains of the great deep had broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

This little incident was more than my wife's nerves could endure, and she promptly refused to make the journey, a wise decision, for the trip turned out to be one which no European woman could go through with any degree of comfort.

When the storm had subsided, a start was at length made. The first day we reached the peninsula that forms the connecting link between the North and South portions of the island. No fairer drive could be imagined.

The road, which was in excellent condition, skirts the coast and is lined throughout with the most luxuriant tropical vegetation, the most striking being the flamboyant, gloriously scarlet, and the buru, with its masses of yellow flowers. Oleander, coleus and cana lilies of every hue are to be seen growing wild in the greatest profusion, while the whole country side is dotted with the stately mango and bread fruit trees. That mainstay of native life, the banana, with its large but graceful leaves is much in evidence, and above all tower the slender cocoanut palms crowned with their dense heads of bright green foliage.

Now and again a glimpse is obtained of a neat

bungalow-styled Tahitian House, set back among the trees, and almost hidden from view with magnificent flowering vines. Through the openings of the forest the lagoon, with its wondrous colouring, comes occasionally into view. Upon its placid waters, wherever one looks, may be seen the tiny native out-rigger fishing canoe, its occupant with spear uplifted, keenly intent upon the movements of the finny tribe beneath him. Away in the distance is the coral reef, against which, in a hissing maelstrom of milk-white foam, break the giant billows of the Pacific, whose ceaseless thunderous roar, plainly heard for miles distant, lullabies the uneasy sleeper through the watches of the night.

A noticeable feature in the landscape is the almost complete absence of bird life. This is the more surprising as there is no lack of insect food. During the whole trip, with the exception of a couple of solitary blue cranes, and about half a dozen brightly-coloured finches, not a bird was seen. The natives can give no reason for this, nor could any of the old residents to whom I mentioned the subject.

Of course, in Papeete and neighbourhood, the introduced Minah bird is very much in evidence. It was brought here for the purpose of exterminating the wasp, which had become perfectly unendurable. He lost no time in setting about his task, and in such good earnest that this pest soon became almost a thing of the past. By that time the Minah had arrived to the conclusion that an easier living could be picked up amongst the busy haunts of men, than out in the country chasing the elusive insect. He accordingly migrated into, and took possession of, Papeete, where he has increased, multiplied, and flourished like a green bay tree. In foraging for his victuals he has more assurance than a life insurance agent, while his voracity is phenomenal. He is omnivorous,

nothing in the way of food coming amiss to him ; and as all meals here are served in open verandahs, the Minah has plenty of scope for his thieving propensities, of which, moreover, he is not in the least ashamed. He is the first at the table, and the last to leave it. As an instance of his effrontery, I saw a Minah attempt to appropriate a piece of bread from a three year old native child, and one could see he quite resented what he evidently regarded as the mother's unwarrantable interference. If there is any truth in the doctrine of the survival of the fittest, the Minah species should prove immortal.

The first night out we had to content ourselves with the accommodation afforded in a native house, which, as far as beds were concerned, consisted of a shake-down on mats upon the floor. Next morning our bones felt none the easier for this ; but, as everything was spotlessly clean, we were not disposed to complain.

After supper, our descendant of Nimshi, the genial Aufu, showed signs of possibilities we had not dreamed of. He was a very finely-built, good-looking native, and, as it turned out, well known on the road, especially amongst the gentler sex, with whom he was a great favourite. Consequently, when it became whispered round that the gallant Aufu had arrived, there was a prompt gathering of the youth and beauty of the neighbourhood at our host's abode. We were at first conceited enough to imagine that our personalities were the attraction, but the ladies soon undeceived us completely. Aufu was the favoured one. Upon our realising this state of affairs, we insisted that he should use his influence with the dusky damsels in persuading them to favour us with a native dance, which consists of posturing and singing to the musical accompaniment of an accordian. They were a little bashful at first, but his blandishments ultimately prevailed, and we spent an unexpectedly pleasant

evening, the precursor of others equally enjoyable.

At noon next day we lunched with the Chief of Tautiera—a fine specimen of the Tahitian—and that night reached the extreme end of the island, where we were hospitably entertained by the daughters of the Chief of the district of Variea, their father being absent at Papeete. After supper Aufu appeared on the scene escorted by a number of natives of both sexes. These turned out to be the best musicians and dancers of the village, who, having succumbed to his flatteries, had consented to give us an entertainment. This consisted of the usual playing on an accordeon, clapping of hands, singing and posturing, the latter being occasionally somewhat suggestive of the indecent. In fact, the more sensual the dance, the more it was appreciated by the audience, judging from the hilarity with which a decidedly gross gesture was received. The scene was certainly striking and unique. A beautiful tropic moonlight evening, the green in front of the house thronged with a group of natives men, women, and children, surrounding the players, while the graceful cocoa-nut palms, swaying to the almost imperceptible breeze from the ocean, formed a background that completed the picture. The audience would show their appreciation of the most popular songs by exclamations or by joining in the singing ; and the more excitable would add to the general delight by indulging in indecent postures. This was kept up for a couple of hours without rest or intermission, and, so far as the singing was concerned, without any pre-arranged programme, but, apparently, in accordance with the whim of the respective performers.

Next morning we were up at daylight, an early start having been decreed by the autocratic Aufu, on account of the fact that the return journey, round the other side of the island, was over bad roads and

across rivers that had to be forded. So far, we had travelled along the main highway which is kept in fair condition, all the streams that it crosses being spanned with substantial bridges. This road and bridge building had been carried out exclusively by French soldiers. Since their withdrawal, however, nothing has been done in that respect by the administration, not even to the extent of replacing the bridges that have been carried away by the heavy freshets to which the rivers are subject in the rainy season.

From Variea to Papeete the scenery is of a different character, and the population comparatively sparse. This is accounted for by the fact that there is very little level land skirting the ocean, while, in several places, the mountains slope right down into the sea, necessitating the road being cut out of the solid, basaltic cliff. This peculiarity of the sea coast of that portion of the island is due to the subsidence of the barrier reef to several fathoms below the surface of the ocean. Consequently there is no protection from the destructive force of the enormous seas that, breaking continually upon the exposed shore, dissipate all matter brought down from the mountains by erosion, which would, under ordinary circumstances, go towards creating plateaus of great fertility.

In fording the largest of the rivers it was found absolutely necessary to lighten the load. Our team, though wonderfully strong for their size, being quite unable to drag the "democrat" over the rough bed and against the rushing waters. Consequently, in this dilemma, my two companions divested themselves of their scanty garments and embraced the opportunity of taking a bath *en route*. It was voted unanimously that I should accompany Aufu in the rig, as, without my vigorous English, the mules were very liable to give up the attempt to cross—a task they always approached with evident disgust. My fellow travellers

were in no way averse to this mode of procedure, but what they did object to—very naturally—was the reception usually accorded to them by the natives living in the neighbourhood, who, upon our arrival, invariably gathered upon the far banks of the river to enjoy the pleasure of witnessing a couple of perfectly nude white men emerge from the water. If this reception committee had been composed of men exclusively, no particular objection could have been entertained; but as the fairer sex, young and old, were always represented, there arose a very awkward situation, one not easily met without some sacrifice of dignity. It was a source of continual diversion and amusement to Aufu and myself to watch my friends' ingenious manœuvres in attempting to reach the wagon and don their garments, without exposing their manly charms to the admiring gaze of the female portion of the deputation.

On the fourth day we arrived back in Papeete, after a most enjoyable trip, which had revealed to us the beauties of Tahitian scenery and its wonders of tropical growth, and had given us a glimpse of the native in his natural character, free from contamination with the European's vicious civilisation.

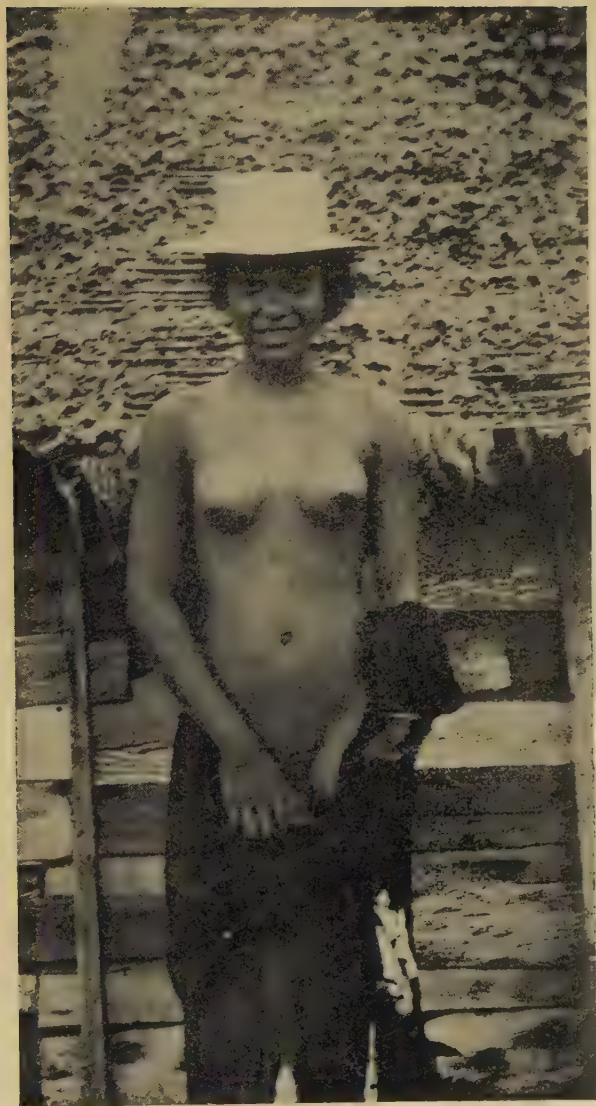
CHAPTER V

TAHITI—CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES—THE FRENCH AS
COLONISERS—LACK OF SYSTEM—PAPARA—ISLAND
TRADITIONS—TRIBAL WARS—THE GOD ORO—
QUEEN PUREA—MISSIONARIES

BETWEEN Christmas and New Year it appeared as if all work was suspended throughout the native community of Papeete and its neighbourhood, in order to worship at the Bacchanalian shrine. A perfect Saturnalia of rum drinking prevailed. Day and night the streets were paraded by parties of men and women singing, dancing, and flourishing bottles filled with the vilest of spirits, of which they partook copiously. The quantity consumed on these occasions is almost incredible. Our old toppers would not be in the same class with a Tahitian. The accompanying photo shows a party of six, who, when in a very convivial mood, as they passed the hotel, were fortified with a bucketful of rum, to which they helped themselves with a tin dipper. About two hours afterwards I met them staggering homewards, perfectly happy. The men were hugging their fair companions, and not a drop was left in the pail.

A noticeable feature of the native drinking bouts is the fact that they are never quarrelsome. On the contrary, their behaviour is marked by good humour, amity, and almost ludicrous politeness towards every one whom they meet.

Fortunately, though the French, for no good reasons, have deprived the Chiefs of all legal authority, these



TAHITIAN GIRL, IN DESHABILLE.

[Facing page 28.]



RARATONGAN GIRL.



RARATONGAN SCENERY.



CUTTING BANANAS, RARATONGA.

latter still possess considerable moral influence over the people, which, be it said to their credit, is used on every possible occasion, throughout the country districts, in the interests of total abstinence from rum drinking. Recognising the demoralising effect of intemperance upon the native population they deplore the attitude of the authorities upon this subject, and have repeatedly approached the Government with the view of obtaining prohibitory legislation. Little success, however, has attended their efforts.

Why the French allow such a scandalous state of affairs to continue is a mystery. Probably the reason is that the revenue derived from the sale of spirits cannot be spared, so long as the present and ever increasing host of officials are retained in office, though the services of at least three-quarters of them could be easily dispensed with, without diminishing the efficiency of the administration of the Colony.

I was informed, on good authority, that there are over three hundred civil servants engaged in the government of the three groups—that is the Society, Paumotu, and Marquesas—or about one for every forty inhabitants. Practically the whole of the revenue of the Colony is appropriated to the salaries of this comparatively useless army of officials. There is, consequently, nothing remaining for necessary public improvements, such as the providing of a much required drainage system for Papeete, and the building of bridges over the numerous rivers that now have to be forded when driving round the island—a proceeding attendant with some danger during the rainy season.

Moreover, one might naturally expect that, under such a system, the public would be well and quickly served by the different departments. On the contrary, the time required to transact any ordinary business is heart-breaking. Of course, in a community whose motto is “never do anything to-day which can be

performed to-morrow," these delays are looked upon with equanimity ; but they certainly try the patience of a stranger accustomed to different methods. Take, for instance, the Post Office department. It is scarcely credible, but I had to wait fully three-quarters of an hour before I could obtain the registration of a letter, standing the while in the fierce rays of a tropical sun. It was probably well for me that my lurid Anglo-Saxon comments upon French official methods were not understood. Besides, there is quite a small army of gendarmes, under regular pay, scattered throughout the different islands, for what purpose neither they nor anyone else could tell you. The natives are remarkably peaceful, and are scrupulously honest. This, in a way, is fortunate, because confinement in gaol is no deterrent to the commission of offences against the laws—for the simple reason that it is not considered a disgrace or punishment by either the offender, his relatives, or by the public at large.

An instance illustrating this peculiarity came before my notice. A woman, for purloining some trifling articles from her neighbour, received a six months' sentence. She was instructed to go home, and as soon as the gendarme had time to spare—very little occupation is sufficient to keep these gentlemen busy—he would conduct her to the Papeete lock-up. After waiting for a couple of months, as no one appeared to take her into custody, she marched into town, presented herself before the Chief of the force, and indignantly demanded the reason for such neglect. He promised to attend to her case as soon as possible, but when informed that her term would not run from that date, but from the time of the commitment, she showed in an unmistakeable manner that, in her opinion, a gross injustice was being perpetrated. What could be done with people of that way of thinking if they happened to be unlawfully inclined ?



TAHITIAN FISHING HUT.



CARRYING PLANTAINS TO MARKET, TAHITI.



THE ANCIENT VEHICLE IN WHICH WE DROVE ROUND TAHITI.

[Facing page 30.]



A WOODLAND NYMPH, TAHITI.



THE BELLE OF PAPEETE, TAHITI.



CHIEF OF TAUTIERA, TAHITI.

The authorities state that bars and bolts are necessary only for the purpose of keeping the average native out of gaol, not for retaining him in confinement. There is no danger of an attempt to escape. With plenty of food, and light tasks, what more pleasant mode of passing the time could he desire?

While on the subject of Colonial administration, it might be pertinent to contrast the French system with that of the neighbouring Cook Island Confederation under British rule. With the Manikiki group to the north, this latter constitutes a New Zealand Colony, inhabited by about eleven to twelve thousand natives. Including the Commissioner, who is in reality Governor, there are only twelve officials in all. Yet, notwithstanding this great disparity in numbers as compared to those employed by the French, a decidedly better system of administration is maintained in the British possessions—in fact, there is no comparison between the two. The truth is that, as regards colonisation, the French are absolute failures.

After the New Year we drove out to Parpara, some twenty-four miles from Papeete, where a very pleasant few days were spent with the Chief of that district, Tati Salmon. His mother, the High Chieftainess of the Papara clan, was allowed by special edict of King Pomare the Fourth to marry a Mr. Salmon, an Englishman, at the time resident upon the island. Hence the name of her son. Previously no Tahitian woman of rank could marry an European.

Mr. Salmon's bungalow is beautifully situated, near the beach, at the mouth of a small stream. A grand avenue of stately acacia trees lead up to the house, which is completely covered by the largest Bouganvillier vine I have ever seen; its trunk equalling in girth that of a fair-sized tree. At each end of the verandah, growing up two enormous flamboyants are a couple more Bouganvilliers, the intermingling of the

respective scarlet and purple flowers creating a most pleasing effect. Taken as a whole I do not think there is anywhere on the island a prettier residence and grounds than that of the Chief of Papara.

At the rear of the premises, on the green, is a large, flat-topped platonic rock, measuring about six feet by four, and weighing several tons. A romantic legend told concerning this stone shows that the fortunes of the clan Papara have in no small measure been affected by the circumstances that led to its being brought here.

Many years prior to the date upon which Wallis discovered Tahiti (the native historian is not very definite as to the exact time), the Papara clan, under a succession of astute, powerful chiefs, had multiplied, flourished, and become a great power in the land. There was no supreme authority in those days, the island being divided into different districts, each under the jurisdiction of an independent chief. So pre-eminent, however, had become the ruler of Papara, that his brother chiefs believed him to be meditating a campaign of conquest with the view to proclaiming himself King of Tahiti. To frustrate these suspected designs on the part of Papara, a confederacy was formed, by the opposing interests, who, when a favourable opportunity arrived, declared war upon their ambitious rival. They expected to find him unprepared—in which case an easy victory would have been gained. Papara, however, was not to be caught sleeping. He hastily gathered together an army, with the result that a great and sanguinary, but undecisive battle was fought, at the termination of which both sides retired to their respective territories completely exhausted.

Both Papara and the allies, however, realised that his cessation of hostilities was merely temporary; so, that the issue remained to be decided at some



MAKING A MAT, RARATONGA



WASHING CLOTHES.



GROUP OF NATIVES, RARATONGA.

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WHARF AVARUA.



AVARUA, RARATONGA.

[Facing page 33.]

future date. The former immediately set about devising ways and means to meet the inevitable crisis. A grand Council, composed of the principal men of the clan, was held, at which it was acknowledged their very existence was in imminent danger, also that nothing short of a miracle could avert the threatened disaster.

Amongst other subjects discussed was the question as to how much assistance had been rendered by their tribal god in the recent fight. The consensus of opinion tended towards the idea that he had either gone back upon his constituents in their dire extremity—as deities have a disconcerting habit of doing occasionally—or, that the combined gods of the enemy were too powerful for him. The majority inclined to the latter theory. It could scarcely be expected they contended, that one ordinary, common, everyday god could equal in prowess half a dozen rival divinities.

When everyone present appeared to have reached the lowest depths of despair, a happy thought struck the High Priest. Was not the house of Papara intimately related by marriage and blood to that of the King of Raiatea, a large island about one hundred miles distant? Was not this monarch the fortunate possessor, besides being under the protection of, the great, mighty, and invincible, war god Oro? No other god or combination of deities was like unto him. No nation had ever withstood the consuming fire of his wrath. He was supreme; he was alone, in his pre-eminence. Why not, therefore, dispatch a deputation to Raiatea, who could explain to his Majesty the peril threatening his relative of Papara, and ask for the temporary loan of the almighty Oro until the crisis had passed.

This suggestion of the High Priest seemed to all present a wise one, and a motion to adopt it was carried unanimously. In accordance therewith, a large, double

war canoe, filled with an influential deputation, was at once dispatched to Raiatea, and the King of that island, having been first put in high good humour by a very valuable presentation, was enlightened as to the objects of the mission. He, after consultation with his chiefs, decided to grant the request, running the risk of danger to his kingdom during the deity's short absence. It does not appear that the god himself was consulted in the matter, a proceeding which, to say the least of it, was certainly somewhat discourteous. In those days, however, the islanders did not seem to stand much on ceremony, even with deities.

As soon as the King's consent to Oro's removal was received no time was lost in embarking the god, together with his footstool, and conveying him to Tahiti. He was landed and enthroned near the beach, at the Chief of Papara's house, upon the footstool, the identical block of stone above mentioned, which has remained until the present day precisely where it was placed long years ago. As for Oro, his glory has departed for ever. He has gone the way of all deities.

But to return to my story. As soon as the almighty Oro was duly installed in a temporary habitation built over him, as a protection against the weather, to which even gods are not impervious, human sacrifices were offered up by the High Priest with the object of securing his aid and of appeasing any resentment he might feel on account of his summary removal from Raiatea. The Papara men evidently felt that they had acted somewhat discourteously in not consulting the deity as to whether it would suit his convenience, or health, to be removed at such short notice from his hearth and home. Subsequent events proved, however, either that he was quite agreeable to the change, or that if he were not so, the valuable propitiatory sacrifices offered up to him were graciously accepted.

Upon the termination of these ceremonies hostilities were again resumed ; whereupon both sides appeared in the field with every available combatant that could be mustered. It is said that even the women, following their husbands for the purpose of inciting them to the performance of heroic acts, were eventually drawn into the contest, and fought like furies in the thick of the fight. Certainly there is no doubt that a veritable battle of Armageddon took place, when wonderful deeds of valour were achieved, forming the theme for many a fireside story, the telling of which holds enthralled an audience, even to the present day. From morn till evening the fight waged with unabated fury—victory inclining first to one side, then to the other. But, as the sun was nearing the horizon, the allies, by almost superhuman efforts, were slowly but surely driving their antagonists from the field, when an event happened that not only turned the tide, but also shews once more how often history repeats itself.

Just as at the battle of Lake Regillus, when at the critical moment the Great Twin Deities, Castor and Pollux, came on their milk-white steeds to the relief of the Romans, so, on this famous day in Tahitian history, did the great war god Oro appear on the scene to the assistance of Papara in its hour of dire distress.

Moreover, so well did he maintain the island-wide reputation he had achieved as a goodly warrior and the performer of Herculean deeds far surpassing the powers of puny man, that, almost in the twinkling of an eye, he transformed an apparently disastrous rout into a glorious victory for his devoted worshippers. Tradition avers that from his battle-axe, which no mortal could wield, came flames of fire consuming the enemy on all sides, while his countenance, as he hustled through the fight, was so terrible that no opponent could look upon it and live. So decisive, in fact,

was the battle, that the supremacy of Papara could not be disputed for some generations to come.

Now, in consideration of the valuable services rendered by Oro to the Papara Chief, it might reasonably have been expected that the latter, in pursuance of his agreement with the King of Raiatea, would at once have returned the deity to the bosom of his wife and family at that island. Instead, realising that in Oro he had a good thing, the Papara clan decided to keep him where he was, an act of bad faith which proved a Nemesis to his descendants years afterwards, shewing how dangerous it is to attempt to play the fool with a deity. But thereby hangs another story.

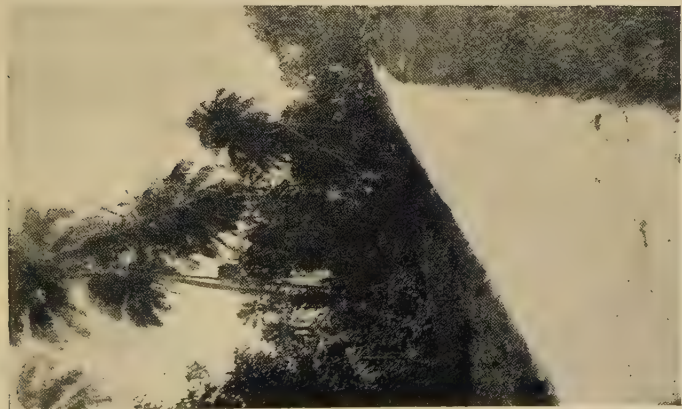
When Wallis, and, later, Captain Cook, first visited Tahiti, Purea, the High Chieftainess of Papara, who was called by them Oberea, held practically undisputed sway over most of the island. She was a woman of unbounded ambition; and having taken in marriage Amo, chief of a neighbouring powerful family, decided, as an ocular testimony to her pre-eminence, to erect a temple larger than any in existence on the group, which, when completed, was to be dedicated to their son, Teriere. This temple, measuring 370 feet by 354 feet, and 44 feet high, was composed of a mass of coral, the flat summit being reached on all four sides by stone steps cut in solid pieces from the mountain rock—an undertaking of no small magnitude considering the class of tools available.

It was known as the Marae of Mahaiatea, being called after the promontory on which it stood. There now remains only a shapeless mound. It has been used for the last forty years as a quarry, from which has been taken sufficient coral to meet the lime requirements of the district, without appreciably affecting its bulk; whence an idea may be had of the immense quantity of material used in the erection of the building.

When the marae, or temple, was completed in



RARATONGAN CHILD.



IDEAL WALK, RARATONGA.



PLANTATION, RARATONGA.
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RARATONGANS MAT MAKING.



MAT MAKERS, ARORANGI, RARATONGA.

[Facing page 37.]

1772, a day was appointed for its consecration, as well as for the enthronement of our old warrior friend, the god Oro, who was not only as spry as ever, but who, to Papara's sorrow, again took a hand in the game.

Unfortunately for Purea and her family's clan, gods have longer memories than the sons and daughters of men. Oro was still in exile at Tahiti, fretting and fuming at his enforced detention, instead of being happy and contented on his beloved Raiatea. He was, therefore, biding his time, in the meanwhile nursing his wrath, to keep it warm against his detainers. The ungrateful treatment meted out to him by Pureas' ancestor was neither forgotten nor forgiven. He, therefore, was quite a factor to be reckoned with, though Purea knew it not.

On the principle that "whom the Gods wish to destroy they first make mad," Oro inspired Purea to proclaim a "Rahui" or "Tabu," which meant that everything produced in the territory subject to her jurisdiction during the time of the "Tabu" should be sacred to her son, the prince. Not a pig could be killed, no tapa or mat made, except for the heir apparent; and, at the termination of the "Rahui," everything belonged to the infant.

This proceeding on her part naturally worked a great hardship upon all concerned, and, combined with the using of forced labour in the building of the temple, brought to a head the slumbering jealousies of her neighbouring chiefs, who, on the proposed day of consecration, appeared with armed retainers, and prevented the carrying out of the ceremony. Thus did Oro revenge himself upon the house of Papara for the bad faith of Purea's ancestor. Moreover, when, in the near future, she was in dire need of assistance, there was no Oro as of old to come to her aid.

The preventing of the consecration of the temple,

together with the refusal of the chiefs to recognise her "Rahui," was accepted by Purea as a throwing down by them of the gage of battle. She, therefore, collected an army of her clansmen, but was defeated time and again by her enemies headed by the Chief of Papenoo.

In all probability, however, the outcome would have been otherwise if Papenoo had not been aided by a villianous, cut-throat gang of runaway sailors, armed with guns, as well as by the missionaries, who, on account of her independent ways, had no particular use for Purea. Truly an unholy alliance, under the weight of which poor Purea eventually succumbed, and was compelled to resign the greater portion of her jurisdiction in favour of the head of the house of Papenoo, who ultimately, through missionary influence, as I have before stated, became the King of Tahiti, under the name of Pomara the First.

Therefore, but for the vengeance of a Pagan god, and the sinister designs of Christian missionaries, together with the assistance of a few ruffianly sailors, Tati Salmon's direct ancestor would have no doubt become the first Queen of Tahiti. Such is the irony of fate.

During these troublous times the missionaries kept a diary of the daily happenings, their aims and ambitions. A perusal of this precious volume is very edifying. It shows conclusively, from their own testimony, that in establishing missions throughout these islands, they were not actuated solely by a desire to save the soul of the benighted Pagan Tahitian. It was not altogether a "call to deliver the land from error's chain" that impelled them to set foot on these Polynesian shores, where, by the way, they were not wanted, nor were they invited by the heathen. He was quite happy and contented in his religious "blindness," and only asked to be left alone. We read in this diary, that, during the progress of one of the numerous petty tribal wars which the chiefs, in

most instances, organised to relieve the monotony of the existence of their people, the missionaries misjudged completely the gravity of the situation. Although the casualties in these battles were usually inconsiderable, they concluded if the heathen could only be induced to continue indefinitely their quarrels there would ultimately be none left to occupy the land which the brethren could then possess themselves of in peace and quietness. Moreover the "poor benighted" would incidentally be also permanently cured of his religious "blindness." They accordingly offered up petitions to the Almighty, supplicating Him to encourage the heathen in their strivings, so that the island might no longer be inflicted by the presence of such a godless people, when they (the sanctified elect) might come into their kingdom. It was a very pretty scheme, but one which we gather from subsequent entries in this book, did not apparently appeal to their Deity, who was more humane than His worshippers. This is made plain by another passage in the diary, dated about a year afterwards, in which the islanders are alluded to as living in peace and harmony. The brethren are, therefore, compelled to change their tactics, and we accordingly find them praying that the hearts of the heathen may be inclined to deal more liberally with the Lord's elect. This request, judging by results, has been nobly responded to by the Polynesian. Throughout Oceanica, wherever he has been allowed by civilised governments to alienate his lands, they have passed to a scandalous extent into the possession of the missionary or his descendants. The saving of souls became a purely secondary consideration with the majority of the brethren. No wonder, therefore, that they are looked upon with contempt by nearly all resident Europeans and travellers, and are disliked by the enlightened portion of the native community.

CHAPTER VI

SOUTH SEA VIKINGS—REMARKABLE CANOE VOYAGES— EASTER ISLAND SCULPTURES—PROBABLE ORIGIN— THE HANDIWORK OF A PRE-POLYNESIAN RACE

TAKING into consideration the great distances between the different groups of the Pacific, together with the comparative frailness of the Polynesian vessels in which the islanders were accustomed to navigate the intervening waters, they are certainly well entitled to be termed the Vikings of the South. Some of their achievements in regard to long voyages over the trackless wastes of the Southern Ocean, misnamed the Pacific, throw into the shade those made by their Norse brethren of the Northern Hemisphere. In fact, their claims in this respect, if they were not well authenticated, might be deemed preposterous figments of the imagination.

Adjoining Papara is the district of Tefana E Ahurai, the inhabitants of which were known far and wide as being the most skilful and intrepid mariners of the whole group. They possessed double sailing canoes, each of a size that would accommodate over one hundred adults. By means of these they kept up communication with the most distant known islands.

Moreover, the Chief of this district, by virtue of his rank, always held the position of Taihia, or Commander of the Sea Forces, and when a long voyage was on the "tapis," or an invasion of a neighbouring island determined upon, he became Admiral of the Fleet. No proposed scheme of discovery was ever entered

upon without consulting him and his captains. These privileges being highly prized, as of great value, were accordingly jealously guarded and not allowed to be infringed upon.

One can readily picture, therefore, the excitement that took possession of the hardy old mariners of Tefana E Ahurai, when, long prior to the date of the discovery of New Zealand or any of the islands of the Pacific by Europeans—to be precise, thirty generations ago—news reached Tahiti that a noted navigator of Raiatea, named Tupe, upon his return to that island after a prolonged absence, had brought back wonderful accounts of a fertile land, of vast extent, discovered by him. Tupe's achievement was looked upon as an affront, an encroachment on their cherished monopoly, the insertion of the thin edge of the wedge. If such enterprises, they argued, were allowed to be continued without their aid and guidance, the high estate which they occupied as chief navigators of the group would be jeopardised.

Accordingly a deputation was dispatched without delay to interview the South Sea Columbus, in order, if possible, to obtain from him the direction of the newly-discovered lands.

Tupe, however, was a wary old bird. He had no intention, until he succeeded in making a second voyage, of placing his rivals, the men of Tefana, in such a position that they could share his laurels. To put them off the track, therefore, he gave out that, upon leaving Raiatea, he had headed East of North. They, knowing his character, however, suspected that he was misleading them, and accordingly, after discussing the subject, arrived at the conclusion that the true course lay, probably, in a direction exactly opposite to that which he had indicated—in other words, that the new continent must be about West of South.

Upon the return of the deputation to Tahiti, prepar-

ations were at once commenced for the dispatch of the "Tanuii," the largest canoe of the fleet, to search for Tupe's discovery. She was manned by the most efficient sailors in the district, was victualled for a long voyage, and eventually sailed away, heading South-West. That she ultimately reached New Zealand there is not the shadow of a doubt.

Subsequently several others left the shores of Tahiti for that distant land, and arrived there safely. Then the spirit of adventure appears to have died out, with the result that communication between the colonists and the parent country entirely ceased. Later, when Europeans had arrived in the Southern Hemisphere, the traditions of the Maoris on the subject were found to agree with those of the Tahitians, not only with respect to dates, but also as regards names of the different canoes in which their ancestors had arrived at New Zealand, and of the districts in Tahiti from which they had been despatched.

The most noted of these canoes were the "Mata" (known to the New Zealanders as "Mataatua") from Papara, the "Manuatere" and "Manutura" from Vaiari, while the great sea captain Tari made several round voyages in his well known canoe, the "Aotea," celebrated in song and story. The Raratongans, also, have well-authenticated accounts of expeditions made by them to New Zealand during this age of discovery, with the names of the canoes in which the travellers sailed away. These names, according to Maori traditions, agree with those in which some of their most noted ancestors arrived at their new home from the distant land of their birth.

It may pertinently be enquired how such long voyages could be made by a people ignorant of the science of navigation, without instruments of any kind, and in such frail vessels as they possessed. The Polynesian, however, was, and is, a born seaman.

Also he was well versed in respect to the direction of the prevailing winds, and had a fair knowledge of astronomy in its simplest form. Moreover, the flights of both sea and land birds would assist him considerably in finding land, which, though comparatively near, might be beyond his range of vision. Besides, I think he probably had a sense, since lost to civilised man, but still possessed by the Bedouin Arab, the Australian Black, and the Pathfinder in our Northern forests, by which he was enabled to find his way over the trackless ocean. As for his canoes, they were large, double, very seaworthy vessels, with fine sailing qualities. In them could be stored provisions sufficient for a long voyage, such as cocoa-nuts, and the dried fruit of the pandanus, as well as fish cured in the sun. Water, no doubt, was carried in calabashes at the outset and replenished by the tropical showers. Moreover, in certain seasons of the year, on a voyage to New Zealand from Tahiti or Raratonga, he would be favoured with fair winds both going and returning, while the South-East Trades would waft him quickly to Samoa or Tonga. Nevertheless, the ancient Polynesian mariner must have been endowed with extraordinary pluck in launching his little bark from his island home, and daring the terrors and dangers of the great unknown waste of waters that hemmed in on all sides his known world.

During my many wanderings through the South Pacific the question of how the islands, especially the groups of low-lying coral atolls scattered throughout that vast ocean, became populated by man, has exercised a peculiar fascination for me. After mature consideration of the subject I have come to the conclusions, for reasons elsewhere¹ more fully set forth,

(1) "Thro' Tropic Seas."

that they were in almost every instance colonized by castaways from other islands. Assuredly, during certain seasons of the year, quite a number of natives while engaged in fishing beyond the reefs, must have been blown out to sea, away from the already populated high archipelagoes. A small percentage of these would, without doubt, survive, and be cast away upon other uninhabited islands, where they would become permanent residents. However, in view of the well authenticated voyages of discovery undertaken by the Tahitians and Raratongas, and their colonisation of New Zealand, I am compelled somewhat to modify my views on the subject. These deliberate voyages of theirs, not only to the south, but also west, to Samoa and Tonga, as well as north to the Hawaiian group, must have been a considerable factor in the settlement of the intervening coral attols and low-lying islands, which, no doubt, would be used as regular ports of call.

One evening, while sitting on the verandah with Mr. Salmon, a number of natives were observed diving after fish, which they impaled on ingeniously-pronged spears. This brought up the subject of the islanders' swimming powers. He related several instances illustrative of their capacity for remaining for long periods in the water, the most remarkable being the following. During the last cyclone that passed over the Paumotu group, the low island of Hikueru was terribly devastated, and for the time being submerged by the tidal wave accompanying the hurricane. There were over five hundred lives lost, including, it was supposed, a girl called Teamo. The astonishment of her surviving relatives may therefore be imagined, when, on the third day after the abatement of the storm, she came paddling a canoe through the opening of the reef into the lagoon. Upon being questioned, she stated that, during the height of the storm, while



LANDSCAPE SCENE, RARATONGA.



RARATONGAN NATIVE DWELLING.

[Facing page 44.]



RARATONGAN BELLE.

[Facing page 45.]

clinging to a cocoa-nut tree close to the inner shore of the island, an enormous volume of water carried her clean over the land out to sea. After swimming for an unknown length of time, she was cast quite naked upon a small island which she recognised as Puka Puka, over fifteen miles distant from Hikuero. Out of a camphor wood chest found upon the beach she obtained a "parau" and undershirt, as well as some canned salmon from a stranded case. A small canoe, badly damaged, had also been washed ashore. This was easily made seaworthy, whereupon Teamo proceeded to paddle back to her home, arriving there, in due course, without any further mishaps. This was her story, and it appeared so incredible that the natives could not disguise the scepticism, whereupon she challenged them to go over to Puka Puka, and see for themselves the chest and broken case of salmon. Upon proceeding there they were found just as she had stated, thereby corroborating her story. It was certainly a marvellous swim, on a night of pitchy darkness, during the height of a tropical cyclone, and through waters swarming with the voracious kind of shark that infests the Paumotu group. Teamo assuredly deserved a medal for long distance swimming.

On our return to Papeete from Papara, I was introduced by a native friend to Mr. John Brander, who had spent some years at Easter Island, that lonely speck of land away to the eastward, with its wonderful stone sculptures. Upon returning to Tahiti he brought back with him one of the smallest of the idols, which he kindly allowed to me to photograph. The largest of these mysterious, massive images measures over 37 feet high. In reply to my query, he gave it as his opinion that they were sculptured by the ancestors of the present inhabitants of the island. I cannot, however, agree with this theory. It appears to me incredible that on so small an area of land, twenty

miles in circumference and isolated to the extent of over fifteen hundred miles, the ancestors of the present inhabitants could ever have reached the advanced state of civilisation which must be postulated if they are to be credited with sculpturing these enormous images out of the solid rock. Moreover, it is not at all plausible that, after attaining to such a comparatively high state of culture, they would degenerate to the barbaric condition in which their descendants were found when first visited by Europeans.

My solution of the problem is rather that there was originally a much more extensive level land area surrounding the mountain peaks which now constitute Easter Island; that the inhabitants who sculptured the idols were akin to the Incas, and that, during one of the violent, volcanic eruptions, so common on the South American coast, a cataclysm occurred, in which the low lying lands were submerged, destroying the inhabitants to a man, before they could attain safety on the mountain slopes. A feature that lends weight to this theory is the fact that the largest of the sculptures is to be seen in an incomplete state, not detached from the rock, with tools scattered about as if the work had been brought to a sudden termination.

The present inhabitants of Easter Island are Polynesians, whose ancestors, in my opinion, either migrated to this outpost of Oceanica, or were driven there from their island home, to the westward, by one of the violent storms that rage so frequently in these latitudes. Moreover, when the island was first discovered by Europeans, the natives had no traditions even as to who had cut these massive images out of the solid rock. They ascribed them to the handiwork of the gods.

Professor MacMillan Brown, with whom I travelled from Raratonga to New Zealand, had made a life study of the origin of the Polynesian races, past and

present. He is of the opinion that these gigantic sculptures on Easter Island, as well as the cyclopean ruins on the Carolines and Samoa, and the Tongan colossal trilithon, composed of three giant stones in the form of a gateway, almost identical with those at Lanyon and St. Ives in Cornwall—in fact all of the numerous stone monuments of a by-gone people scattered throughout the Pacific—are the handiwork of what he terms a Megalithic race whose original home was on the Atlantic Coast of Europe, and the Southern shores of the Mediterranean. That, several thousand years ago, causes, which will ever remain unknown, compelled them to migrate eastward in two divisions. The principal tribe “treked” across Northern Europe and Siberia to the Pacific, where it again divided; the main portion going south along the Asiatic coast, thence, by way of Japan and Micronesia, to the islands of the Central and Eastern Pacific, while the residue apparently crossed Behring Straits to North America, and followed the western coast line to Mexico, Yucatan, and the land of the Incas whose ancestors they probably were.

This theory is borne out by the fact that all along the routes indicated are found megalithic remains of this mysterious race. Moreover, it explains the cause of the marvellous similarity that exists between, for instance, the giant busts of Easter Island, and the sculptures found in the ruined cities of Central America and Bolivia, as well as that between the Cromlechs of Western Europe and those in Polynesia.

Mr. Clement Wragge, a member of the Polynesian Society, and a noted authority on this subject, stated in a lecture recently delivered at Auckland, New Zealand, “that the inscriptions at the Bay of Islands have nothing to do with the Maoris (who are a branch of the great Polynesian race) but have a prehistoric origin. These marks have, to my mind, been made

by a people allied to those who built the wonderful statues, and carved the marvellous inscriptions on Easter Island. The latter have nothing to do with the Polynesians, but are allied to those found in Central and South America long ages ago. In fact, they refer to the Atlantean race, which intermingled with the still more ancient race of Lemurians. These, I am convinced, inhabited a land which once existed where is now the Pacific Ocean, Easter Island, Pitcairn, Tahiti, Raiatea, Fiji, New Caledonia, Raratonga, and the main or foundation rocks of New Zealand, SouthE east Australia and Tasmania are undoubtedly the remains, sticking up, of that old Lemurian land."

I have information that in the north of New Zealand (I do not care to disclose the exact locality at present) there are to be found, in certain caves, human bones of enormous size—far larger than those of human beings of to-day. If this is true, they are the bones of the old Lemurian-Atlantean race. I intend to have a look for them.

What was the fate of that portion of this ancient people who occupied the Pacific Isles, and who must have disappeared before the present Polynesian inhabitants appeared on the scene? They have completely vanished, leaving, as their only records, everlasting monuments of stone. It is, therefore, scarcely likely that the problem will ever be solved ; it will remain, in all probability, the Great Mystery of the Pacific.

On the 13th of January the Union S.S. Co.'s steamer "Haurotu," arrived, and next day we left in her for Raratonga, followed by "Yurannas" from all our kind Papeete friends. We had passed an idyllic five weeks on Tahiti, during which we were completely cut away from all communication with the busy haunts of men, and all their attendant cares and worries.



GIRL WASHING, RARATONGA.



RARATONGAN GIRLS.

Facing page 48.



RARATONGAN CHIEF.



RARATONGAN GIRLS

CHAPTER VII

THE COOK ISLAND CONFEDERATION — RARATONGA —
AVARUA—FORM OF GOVERNMENT—PECULIAR MISSION
LAWS—COURT CASES—SUPERSTITIONS—
BURIAL CUSTOMS

RARATONGA, the chief island, and seat of Government, of the Cook Islands Confederation, was reached, after a pleasant passage, on the 18th of January. This group, lying almost due west of the Society Islands, was discovered by, and is called after, the great navigator.

Prior to our arrival at Raratonga, on a fine, sunny afternoon, we were imbued with the idea that the scenic aspect of Tahiti was so nearly perfect as to be without a rival in beauty among island landscapes. Upon reaching the Cook group, however, we unanimously agreed that Tahiti's charms were quite equalled by those of Raratonga.

Seen from the sea opposite Avarua, the principle port on the island, an entrancing picture meets the view. Distant about a hundred yards from the stern of the vessel, slowly heaving to the long swells, is the surf breaking in a milky yeast on the fringing coral reef with a continuous roar, that is in marked contrast with the silence of the peaceful scene beyond. From the snow-white sandy beach to the foot of the mountains the land is covered with a wealth of vegetation of varied shades of green, of the beauty of which it would be futile to attempt a description. Almost every tree is gorgeous in its array of flowers, those of

the scarlet flamboyant, yellow buru, and purple Bougainvillier predominating, while, towering above all, rises the slender-stemmed cocoa palm, its wonderful crest of fronds swaying lightly to the gentle breeze.

The mountain range that occupies the whole of the interior rises in rugged grandeur, almost perpendicularly from its base. The hills are covered with luxuriant verdure to the summit of their highest peaks, the loftiest, Te Atu Kura, reaching an altitude of 2,920 feet above the sea, and forming a strikingly wild background to the placid plain below. Down a beautiful valley, running away back into the hills, meanders to the ocean, through Avarua, over its pebbly bed, a stream of crystal clearness, and all about the fertile land through which it flows, the banana, pineapple, mango, papia, in fact, all kinds of tropical fruits, grow in wild profusion. To add to the glamour of this enchanting scene comes occasionally, wafted from the land by the evening breeze, the fragrant odour of tropical flowers.

The accompanying photograph of the harbour and its surroundings, though hardly more adequate than a pen picture, may convey some idea of the scene I have attempted to depict.

What an earthly Paradise it must have appeared to Captain Cook and his mariners when, after long and weary wanderings over the trackless ocean, they landed at last at Raratonga. No wonder his sailors continually deserted, unable to tear themselves away from the charms of the entrancing environment and of the dusky island beauties.

Upon landing, no unnecessary trouble was experienced from Customs officials; a pleasant contrast to the treatment meted out to the unfortunate traveller in most places he visits. We then proceeded to the "Whare Manuhire" (Maori for the House of Rest), a solid concrete hostelry, built by the Govern-



PACKING BANANAS, RARATONGA.

[Facing page 50.]



FISH SPEARING, RARATONGA.

ment, and rented to Mr. Grieves, who made us very comfortable during our stay on the island.

Up to 1888 Raratonga was under native rule, the head Ariki, or Chief, being *de facto* King or Queen, as the case might be. The question of women's rights had been fought out by the Raratongan Suffragettes in the long ago, and decided favourably to them, with the result that there was nothing to prevent the eldest child of an Ariki, unfortunate enough to belong to the fair sex, from taking the position of her deceased parent. From that date until 1900, the head of the state was Queen Makea, a very able and strong-minded old lady, who governed the island, under the protection of Great Britain, and assisted by a Resident Commissioner. In 1900, Raratonga and the other islands of the group, together with the Manihiki attols to the north, were formally annexed by the British, who for a short period ruled over them as the Cook Island Confederation. They were then handed over to New Zealand, and are now administered by that Colony.

The government consists of a Federal and an Island Council. The membership of the former is confined to the Arikis, or Chiefs of the different islands in the Confederation. The latter consists of the local Arikis and nine members, elected by the adult native vote, together with the Resident Agent, who sits as president. The Federal Council has the power of enacting Federal ordinances, but has no control over the estimates; while each Island Council can only pass ordinances affecting local affairs. The laws so passed, however, do not come into force until assented to by the Governor of New Zealand, in the name and on behalf of His Majesty. The Governor has also power to order the repeal of any ordinances. There is one very important and salutary exception to these powers, in regard to intoxicating liquors. The Councils have no authority to allow the sale of alcohol, which is absolutely pro-

hibited. The white residents can import sufficient for their own use ; but only upon obtaining the consent of the Resident Commissioner, who also has power to limit the quantity.

Theoretically, therefore, the Confederation is a self-governing Colony of New Zealand, but, as a matter of fact, the powers granted to the different Councils are more apparent than real. Practically the Government is vested solely in the Resident Commissioner at Raratonga, an appointee of, and responsible to, the New Zealand Ministry.

The New Zealand Customs tariff is, with some exceptions, in force throughout the islands, and the revenue derived therefrom is practically that of the dependency.

As far as I could judge the system is working well and smoothly, in respect to the white as well as the native population. Of course, however, the success of such a system, which is practically autocratic, depends entirely upon the character of the Resident Commissioner, who is, in reality, Governor. Under the present incumbent, Captain J. Eman-Smith, harmony and satisfaction prevails ; but, undoubtedly, were the office held by a man of a different stamp, endowed with unlimited powers, great abuses might be perpetrated.

The High Court, consisting of the Commissioner, enforces the laws, and has jurisdiction over all the islands, with the exception of the island of Nuie. An appeal is allowed to the Supreme Court of New Zealand, and thence to the Court of Appeal.

The Island Court sits once a week, and I was glad to learn that the prohibitory laws against the importation, for sale, of alcoholic liquors were rigidly enforced. The beneficial effects of this policy are at once noticed by visitors, who, like ourselves, had come from Tahiti, where the natives, with very dire results to both sexes,



WOODLAND NYMPH, RARATONGA.

[Facing page 52.]



NORMAN WHEATLEY AND FAMILY, ROVIANA LAGOON,
NEW GEORGIA.



NORMAN WHEATLEY'S CHILDREN ROVIANA LAGOON,
NEW GEORGIA.

[Facing page 5]

may obtain all the intoxicants they can purchase.

Prior to the annexation of the islands by New Zealand, and while under native rule, the real power was vested in the missionaries, from whom all laws emanated. They drafted the ordinances which were afterwards made law by the Arikis, not, however, always willingly. Some of these laws were very amusing. Most of them have since been repealed by the High Court. The following are a few examples taken at random from the Statute Book :

" If one drink bush beer on the week day the fine will be for the maker \$10.00, for the drinker \$5.00. If drunk on the Sabbath the fine shall be \$15.00." To the careful man this was an inducement not to do his celebrating on the Sunday.

" No one to walk about from house to house while the people are in church, except if a pig dies to get it in and cook it. Fine \$5.00." As recently as seven years ago the authorities tried to enforce this law against me in Manihiki.

" When any marriage feast is being held and food and things are brought, the things must not be rushed. Sit quietly and if you receive no share go away quietly. If you do otherwise—fine \$5.00."

" When a father has lectured his child for wrong doing and the child pays no attention, let him do five fathoms of stone wall." This would be a good law to enforce, say, in the United States.

" Placing one's arms round a woman without the offender having a torch in the other hand—fine \$10.00." This enactment, presumably, referred only to the night time ; during the day a man might hug his lady-love as much as, and in what manner he pleased.

" Going from one village to another on the Sabbath is prohibited. Fine \$10.00."

" Taking an unmarried woman inland prohibited. Fine \$10.00." This must have worked a hardship

on the love-sick swain. He could scarcely be expected to do his courting on the high road.

“Whoever shall adulterate food or produce with any foreign substance or shall increase the weight thereof by concealing a stone or weighty substance in a basket of produce—penalty: hard labour not exceeding two months.” The unsophisticated native had evidently learned some of the methods of his white brother.

I attended a regular sitting of the High Court, at which two cases illustrating the character of the native were adjudicated upon. The complaint, in one instance, was laid by a brother, who charged the defendant with the abduction of his sister. These were the particulars: A lady of high rank had a male relative, the owner of considerable property, concerning whom, on account of his *liaisons* with the fair sex, she was anxious to be relieved of all responsibility. After considerable discussion amongst the family, it was decided that the marriage of this gay Lothario constituted the only solution to the problem. She, accordingly, induced him to make advances to the complainant, a Tahitian, for the hand of his sister, a very pretty woman whom he admired. The result was that, without consulting the lady in question, they entered into a bargain by virtue of which the would-be Benedict, upon marrying the girl, agreed to allow the complainant free use of a certain portion of his land. Thereupon the old lady, who was overjoyed with the prospect of being relieved from her incubus, gave orders to prepare a magnificent wedding feast, fitting to the occasion, to which she invited everyone on her extensive calling list. But, as Burns very truly wrote:

“The best laid plans of mice and men gang oft alee.”

When the auspicious day arrived, the Mission Church was filled to the doors with the youth and beauty

of Raratongan select society, attired in the latest island fashions. At the appointed hour for the celebration of the marriage ceremony the bridegroom was there ready to receive his fair young bride, when the Tahitian appeared at the church and excitedly announced that his sister, the bride, had been abducted to the hills. Search parties were at once dispatched to scour the country for the missing lady. Upon their return some hours later without having succeeded in finding any trace of her, the high official was furious. All her plans were frustrated. Besides, no marriage no feast. What then was to become of all the "kai kai" (food). A happy thought struck her. What difference could it make to the bridegroom whom he married, so long as the girl was passable? There need be no sentiment about the matter. She, thereupon, dispatched messengers throughout the district inviting any father possessed of a marriageable fair-looking daughter to bring her along forthwith to the church, and she, if necessary, would compel the bridegroom to marry her. In due course an accommodating father, with a rather prepossessing damsel, appeared on the scene prepared to fill the breach. The bridegroom was quite content with the new arrangement. One girl was as good as another to him. As for the lady, she appeared more than satisfied. Anything in the shape of a husband suited her. They were, therefore, without any more ado, made man and wife. The feast that followed beat all records. It has since furnished an absorbing theme for gossip at all the four o'clock teas of the native *elite*. Truly the high official is a strong-minded old lady. She has certainly a will of her own, which no doubt accounts to some extent for the position she occupies. Then comes the sequel. It appeared that Bride No. 1 had all the time been in love with, and secretly engaged to, a young half-caste, whose wife she intended to be if she married anyone. Now the

fair sex, all the world over, usually thinks out some device to attain its ends. She suggested, therefore, that nothing be said in the meantime to arouse suspicion, while she would apparently acquiesce in the arrangements made by her brother. Then, on the day before the wedding was to be celebrated, they could take to the hills and remain there for a time. It was argued that this proceeding on her part might so anger the bridegroom that he would be glad to give her up. In pursuance of the proposition she, at the eleventh hour, assisted by her lover, hid herself securely in an unfrequented locality, until all danger had passed, when she returned home. Now, on account of the matter having been arranged, nothing more would have been heard regarding the subject but for the intervention of the brother. All other interested parties were perfectly satisfied, except himself. Where did he come in? How about the use of the land he had lost? The result was that he laid the complaint for abducting his sister against her admirer. When all the evidence had been given, the defendant was asked if he intended to marry the girl. Upon his replying in the affirmative the Court, I think very justly, and certainly gallantly, dismissed the action. A few days afterwards another very gay wedding took place, the principal participants being the young half-white and Bride No. 1. Everyone interested is now happy, therefore, save and excepting the Tahitian, who still contends that he has been badly treated.

The second case was against a Chief for desecrating the dead. It appeared that his daughter, who was probably neurotic, complained to him that her deceased uncle had so little regard for her peace of mind and his own self-respect as continually to inflict his presence upon her at night, giving vent at the same time to the most horrible cries. The father, thereupon, proceeded to his dead brother's grave, opened it, and severed

the head from the body. To make doubly sure, however, a stave was driven through the latter into the ground. In defence he pleaded native custom, also that his drastic methods for preventing a recurrence of the visit had proved successful. He was discharged, with a caution not to sin in that way again. Now this man was educated, as well as holding a prominent position in the Church. I am afraid the Christianity of the Polynesian is no more than skin deep. Yet the missionaries have been here for over eighty years.

The Raratongan has some strange ideas of the eternal fitness of things, with respect to the burial of his dead. The graves are scattered about everywhere. Alongside the roads, in their gardens, and away in the bush, as well as in the churchyards. But the strangest and most unconventional places of all that came under my notice were under a verandah, before the front door of a dwelling, and, lastly, it can scarcely be credited, in a kitchen, where the tombstone was used as a table. There is no accounting for tastes in this world.

Another peculiar superstition prevalent is that if any member of the family dies while one is erecting a house, it will be unlucky to finish the building. Consequently, in all the villages, one is confronted with ruined buildings, beside which live the family. As these walls are of solid concrete they last for years, and are very often used as enclosures for burying the dead.

The Raratongan is also much given to depositing in the grave, with the deceased, the most prized of his household gods. In one instance, a piano even was buried, the idea being that, as the departed brother could play on no other musical instrument, he would miss it, if there did not happen to be one in the celestial choir. Certainly this was a very thoughtful and very self-sacrificing act on the part of his relatives. A piano is worth money in this out of the way portion of the world.

CHAPTER VIII

RARATONGA—PROSPERITY OF NATIVES UNDER BRITISH
RULE—CHURCH SERVICES—NATIVE IDEAS OF THE
HEREAFTER—DRIVE ROUND THE ISLAND—
MAT MAKING—SHARK FISHING—SHARK
CATCHING

THE membership of the administration in the Cook Islands Confederation is reduced to a minimum. There is a Resident Commissioner, who, besides being Judge of the High Court, is in reality Governor, a Treasurer, and four Government Agents stationed on different islands in the group. The Civil Service consists of a Medical Officer, whose services, together with all medicines, are dispensed gratuitously, a Registrar of Land Titles, and a few native assistants. The positions of Postmaster and Collector of Customs are vested in the Treasurer.

It will thus be seen that the cost of government, to the native, cannot by any means be onerous. Moreover, his condition under British rule is immensely happier than under that of the Chiefs and Missionaries. During the Arikis *régime* the common people were little better than slaves. The Chiefs owned all the lands, which were cultivated for their sole benefit by the respective tribesman, who could scarcely lay claim to their very lives. Later, when the missionary appeared on the scene, joining force with the Arikis, an increased material burden was inflicted upon the poor native, whose superstitious terrors, cleverly exploited for the purpose, deprived him of his only

remaining consolation, the control of the destiny of his own soul. Now, however, the Raratongan enjoys to the utmost the fruits of his labour, with protection to life and property. The laws are construed according to their self-evident intent, and are administered accordingly. Lawyers are not allowed to practice in the High Court, where they were in the habit of complicating the issues, and of suggesting legal interpretations contrary to common sense and equity, as well as of retarding the course of justice, by obtaining rules of court, nominally in the interests of expedition, but really for the purpose of preventing progress, with the sole view of being able to charge exorbitantly for their useless services.

With his changed political position the native has reached a degree of prosperity, which, with his cheerfulness, good nature, and happy disposition, combine to make his life an almost idyllic one. He works just as long as is necessary to supply his material wants. Having done this, no recompense, almost, will induce him to perform any further labour. His philosophy is summed up in the query, "Why should I work with the object of accumulating property I have no need of, and cannot use, in order that some one may enjoy it after my decease?" No argument will change his mind upon this subject. He will meet your remarks with blank and stolid indifference, keeping his own counsel. When in this state of mind he is the "beau ideal" of a passive resister, and would make a fine Irish tenant.

No wonder that, with such material to work upon, the missionaries had to spend many years upon these islands before they secured a single convert. Fortunately for them, however, the native has another strong trait of character, counteracting his stubbornness. He is a very imitative animal. Consequently, as soon as a few conversions were made among the ruling

class, the bulk of the population quickly followed. The missionary then became a power in the land from whom all authority flowed. It is not, therefore, surprising that he finds it difficult to accommodate himself to the new order, represented by the British official, whose coming has dethroned him from his high estate, with the result that he is continually causing trouble to the Government by an unwarranted interference in matters pertaining exclusively to the jurisdiction of the secular authorities. I presume, however, that he would have to be more than human to act otherwise, under the circumstances.

Though, happily for himself and for those interested, the missionary has been shorn of most of his political authority, his religious influence, judging from the two occasions upon which I attended church, is not, as at Tahiti, on the wane, at least so far as Raratonga is concerned. The building, a large, solid, coral concrete erection, was filled to its utmost capacity with a mixed congregation of natives, men and women, a contrast with what we observed at Tahiti, where the male sex was conspicuously absent.

So large a body of Polynesians as is gathered together at these Sunday services is a spectacle worth travelling a considerable distance to see. Nowhere else, perhaps, will one meet with more uniformly fair specimens of humanity—the men physical marvels, the women perfect types of the female sex, well developed, and with a carriage that could not be improved upon. The facial expression, in repose, might be considered somewhat melancholic, but when animated by a smile it is indeed charming, while the voice of the female is soft and pleasant. The features, not by any means coarse, are often of a distinctly Semitic cast, the eyes large, and dark, with an expression of great solemnity, while the head, surmounted by a profusion of straight, jet black hair, setting off a glossy light brown com-



RARATONGAN GIRL BATHING.

[Facing page 60.]



NEAL ISLAND, SOLOMON ISLANDS.



TAISI HARBOR, SOLOMON ISLANDS.



MANNING STRAITS, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

[Facing page 61.]

plexion, completes an attractive head of the *genus homo*. Though the native is exceedingly partial to bright colours, excellent taste in dress is shown by the women, and no artificial means are employed, such as those adopted by their—nominally—more civilised sisters, in order, supposedly, to improve, but in reality to destroy, the symmetry of the human form divine.

No newspaper being published on the island, an unique procedure is in vogue by which the weekly occurrences are disseminated and discussed, thereby affording public opinion an opportunity to voice itself. About a couple of hours prior to the commencement of the Sunday morning service, the adult members of the community, of both sexes, gather together in the church, when, having elected a chairman, an invitation is extended to those present to report any recent happenings of public import. This having been done, an orderly discussion then takes place upon the various matters so reported. As almost every Polynesian is a born public speaker, there is no lack of oratory at these meetings. The subjects mostly commented upon and criticised are the recent legislative Acts of the Federal and Local Councils. In this way the members of the Assemblies and the Government are kept informed of the feelings of the community, in respect to the ordinances passed by the former.

As soon as the Minister appears in the pulpit all debate on secular matters at once ceases. The young people, who have been waiting outside while their elders have, in their imagination, decided the fate of empires, now postpone their flirtations, file into church, and are relegated, though not promiscuously, to the galleries. Each sex is segregated, the young men and boys occupying one side, the girls the other.

Peculiar means are employed to keep the rising generation in order. Stationed at regular intervals

throughout the galleries are men armed with what might easily be mistaken for long bamboo fishing rods. These are used to prod vigorously any unruly youth or maid whose behaviour falls short of a decorum befitting the occasion. This drastic treatment, I noticed, usually had the desired effect ; a duplicate application of the fishing rod being seldom found necessary, in so far as any particular culprit was concerned.

The Church service, with the exception of a few prayers and a short concluding sermon, is confined principally to singing hymns, an occupation which the native passionately enjoys. This vocal music is of a very peculiar character, differing from that of the European in that the sounds are made to proceed from the lungs and throat, through almost closed teeth, and lips scarcely moving. The sound produced is remarkably ventriloquistic, so much so that it is scarcely possible to locate any particular singer. Again, at the conclusion of each verse, the male performers, instead of dwelling appreciably on the last word, brings the voice forth from the lowest depths of the chest, accompanied by a hollow reverberation, both of which sounds are suddenly cut off with a jerk, just as though someone had come along unawares, and abruptly closed their mouths.

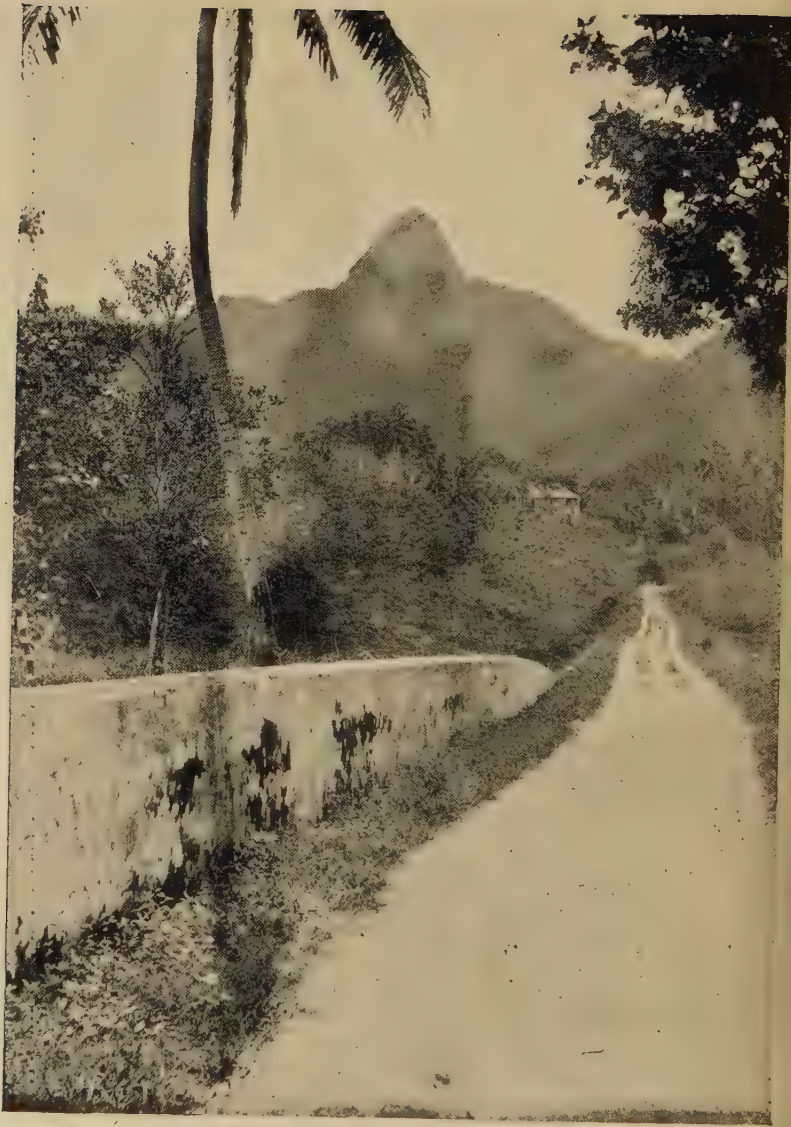
This kind of singing, which is quite unique, and difficult to describe, might not, perhaps, be much appreciated—no more than are the strains of the Scotch bagpipe—by those endowed with a highly-trained, civilised, musical ear ; but, to my primitive, perhaps barbarous, tympanum, the effect was quite agreeable, being, in fact, more pleasing to me than would be the vocal performances of a Patti or Caruso.

The religion of the Polynesian is, I am inclined to believe, purely a mixture of Sabatarianism and superstition. Christian ethics he does not understand,



PRESENTING TO MAKE A PHOTOGRAPH OF HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR,
15th JANUARY, 1910.

[Facing page 62.]



GOVERNMENT RESIDENCY, AVARUA.

[Facing page 63.]

nor have they much weight with him. This is scarcely to be wondered at, remembering that the undue importance mistakenly attached, by their convertors, to the strict observance of the seventh day, has led the native from childhood to look upon such observance as covering a multitude of sins. He considers this, indeed, as almost the sole badge of a Christian.

As an illustration of how strongly the native feels upon this subject, here is a case, heard in court while we were on the island, in which a man was accused of indecently assaulting a woman. The complainant's brother was an eye-witness of the offence, which was committed on the Sunday previous to the trial. After the latter had given his evidence, upon being questioned why he had not interfered on behalf of his sister, his reply, much to the amusement of the Court and of all the Europeans present, was made in all seriousness: "I did interfere. I called out to the prisoner, 'Remember the Lord's Day to keep it holy!'" He, considered that, having reminded the assailant of the fact that it was the Sabbath day, he had performed his duty. The prisoner, having been made to realise this, the witness appeared to have been very much surprised that it did not deter him from continuing the assault. Moreover, one could not help feeling, from the manner of the witness, that the assault in itself was considered of little consequence, the gravity of the offence, in his opinion, lying in the circumstance that it was committed on the Sabbath, a view of the matter which was apparently in accord with that of the large body of natives who thronged the Court-room during the hearing of the case.

As evidence that the natives are yet, to a great extent, Pagan in spiritual ideas, I need only mention one of their superstitions, to which they still strongly adhere. In adopting Christianity they have simply changed the names of their deities.

Running right across the island, outcropping here and there, is a peculiar stratum of dark coloured rock. Not far from the village of Arorangi it ends precipitously overhanging the sea. This precipice is sacred ground to the Raratongans. They believe it to be the "jumping-off place" of the souls of the departed into the Great Unknown; that, after wandering awhile upon the face of the waters, these spirits return periodically to their mortal remains, using the rock as a place upon which to effect a landing. Now the number of tombs scattered promiscuously throughout this neighbourhood certainly far exceeds those in any other locality, outside the church graveyards. I am inclined, therefore, to suspect—though the native will neither acknowledge it, nor even converse on the subject—that the burial of so many dead in such close proximity to the rock is more than a mere coincidence, and has been done designedly, with the object of suiting the convenience of the spirits upon their return, tired and weary, after their journey over the boundless seas. Tradition, moreover, avers that, in the brave days of old, the bodies of those slain in battle were consigned from off this promontory to a watery resting-place. There is, consequently, nothing surprising in the awe and reverence with which the native regards this, to him, sacred spot. If there be any truth in the tradition, when that great day arrives, upon which, in response to the Archangel's final trumpet blast, the sea shall give up its dead, what a grand array of battle-scarred warriors will be marshalled at this hallowed spot of Raratonga.

I have incidentally mentioned that the native is accustomed to bury with the dead those articles which were valued most highly by the deceased during his or her life on earth. They do not attempt to disguise their belief that this is done in order that the spirit of the departed may enjoy the use of these household



WATER NYMPH, RARATONGA.

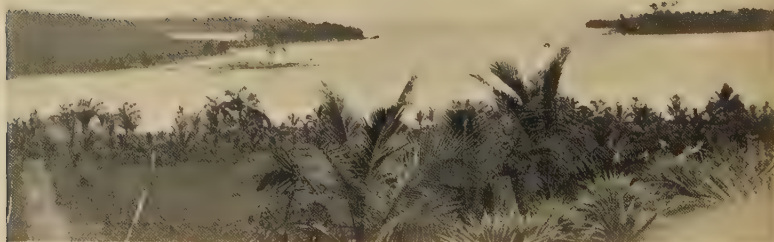
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ROVIANA CHIEF AND WIFE, SOLOMON ISLANDS.



MISSION GIRLS, ROVIANA LAGOON, NEW GEORGIA..



GIZOHARBOR, SOLOMON ISLANDS, A GOVERNMENT STATION.

[Facing page 65.]

gods during the sojourn in the Celestial abode. Even Queen Makea, upon the death of her husband, Ngamaru, only a few years ago, threw all her beautiful dresses into his grave, in order that the spirit might enjoy a soft couch to recline upon, showing conclusively that, though an educated and clever woman, her Christianity was strongly tainted with material Paganism. In fact, the Polynesian is simply a civilised Pagan, and in all probability will remain so until the end, notwithstanding missionary efforts to make him a Christian. The missionary societies are, I imagine, commencing to realise this. It is reported that the London organisation is withdrawing from Southern India, China, and the Pacific Islands. Well, the Islander deserves a hard-earned rest. He has been harried long enough, and should be allowed a breathing spell. Moreover, the hundreds of thousands of pounds annually collected in Europe and America from Church people (principally silly old ladies endowed with a superfluity of piety and money) for the purpose of "delivering the lands of the heathen from error's chain" can be more profitably expended at home in civilising the heathen in our large cities. The standard of religion of the latter, more especially in regard to morality, is far lower than that of the average Polynesian. He is at least decent and natural in his sexual immorality, while his conduct after marriage is as a rule irreproachable; in both of which respects he stands on a far higher plane than do an enormous percentage of the, so-called, more civilised, and, at the same time, more self-righteous, white brethren. Besides, his honesty and straightforwardness in business is such that he will fulfil contracts and liquidate indebtedness under conditions, which, in a civilised community, usually lead to repudiation.

The island of Raratonga is about twenty miles in circumference, and is encircled by a good road skirting

the beach the whole way round. Leaving the village of Avarua, it passes through a dense growth of iron-wood, mango, utu (*Barringtonia Speciosa*), cocoa-nut, and pandamus palms, with, here and there, a maupei, or South Sea Island chestnut. Forest lianas are to be seen everywhere, with their long aerial roots hanging down from the highest branches, while the tree ferns are much in evidence, flourishing wherever they can obtain the slightest foothold on the bark of a tree, but generally in the cleft of an accommodating bough.

The utu is an enormous tree, with wide spreading branches supported on a short, most fantastically gnarled, trunk of immense growth. Its beautiful dense foliage is impervious to the fierce rays of a tropical sun, thereby affording most welcome shelter to the weary traveller during the heat of the day. Like nearly every tree in these regions, the utu flowers in profusion. Its blossoms are large, bell shaped, and of a pinkish hue. From the sap of the utu the islander obtains a preparation which he finds useful for fishing on account of its stupefying effect upon the denizens of the lagoon.

Another interesting member of the forest is the pandamus, or screw pine. Its appearance, in childhood, is that of an ordinary tree; but as it grows up and sends out branches, instead of the trunk expanding to meet the increased strain, aerial roots are thrown out, some of them proceeding from the branches themselves. In this way the pandamus has, in reality, no trunk, until it reaches a height of from fifteen to twenty feet. Below that is a buttress of long thin straight roots producing a most peculiar and unique effect.

Near the native houses, built at frequent intervals along the road, are banana plantations and orange groves. In the low-lying, swampy patches grows the taro, a giant lily with enormous leaves, the root of

which provides a large proportion of native food. When cooked it is a fair substitute for the potato.

At Arorangi, the most important village after Avarua, mat making is the principal industry. It is conducted on a co-operative system. As many as twenty young girls and women will gather together in a large room, where, squatting on the floor, they plait the mats of whatever size and pattern may be required, chatting and talking, usually all at the same time, as most women do under like circumstances. While thus engaged the opportunities thus afforded for the gossip and spicy scandal, so dear to the feminine mind of every race, are, of course, unsurpassed, even by the four o'clock afternoon teas of their Northern sisters. The mats they make at Raratonga are superior to those of most of the islands, but not to be compared with the Samoan article, which is without exception the finest of any made throughout the Pacific.

The dearth of feathered life at Raratonga is, as at Tahiti, very noticeable. On our drive round the island not a single land bird was seen. The Minah has been introduced, but, so far, is only met with round Avarua.

A few years ago a pair of flying foxes were imported, with the object of keeping the rats in check. They have not only failed in that respect, but are now as great a nuisance as the rodent. When the mango, pomegranate, banana, in fact, any kind of fruit ripens, it is at once pounced upon by these voracious pests. Being nocturnal in their habits the depredations committed by them are not easily prevented.

Fish in great varieties abound in the lagoons formed by the barrier reefs that encircle most of the islands of the Pacific. Round Raratonga, however, as well as at most of the islands in the Cook group, the coral reef is of a fringing character, rising perpendicularly from an immense depth, and at low tide bare over almost its whole surface, so that there are few shallow

waters, intervening between the reef and shore, for fish to congregate in. They are, consequently, so very scarce that the native is compelled to devise means for capturing varieties which, on account of the shyness of their habits, would be otherwise ignored. The parrot fish, for instance, in proportion to its size, has a very small mouth, besides being remarkably wary. For these reasons it is difficult to catch, and, therefore, though quite a desirable table fish, is not bothered with, where any other kinds are numerous. To accomplish the undoing of this shy sea-parrot, the Raratongan adopts an ingenious method. Several small hooks are hung from a very buoyant piece of wood about two feet in length. The lines attached to these are effectually hidden by fastening to the float small branches of a particular kind of sea-weed, in such a manner that its berries, which the parrot fish feeds upon, are mixed up with the hooks. This contrivance is then deposited at the mouth of a creek, and allowed to drift seawards with the current. If there are any parrot fish about, a welcome swirl, in the vicinity of the float, soon gladdens the heart of the fisherman ashore. This is followed by the disappearance of the buoy for a considerable time, and its return to the surface some distance away—a performance which is continued until the fish becomes exhausted, whereupon the native sets out in a canoe and secures his catch. When the fish are plentiful, and feeding well, as many as half a dozen of these floats may be seen, with fish attached, greatly to the delight of the watching natives.

At Aitutuki the voracious shark is secured by means which may appear almost incredible. These monsters are accustomed to indulge in a *siesta* during the heat of the day. To escape the glare of the mid-day sun, while reposing, they withdraw to the numerous caverns in the face of the perpendicular fringing reef



CREEK SCENE, SOLOMON ISLANDS.



HEAD HOUSE, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

[Facing page 68.]



VELLA LA VELLA WOMEN, SOLOMON ISLANDS.



MOROFO LAGOON FAMILY, NEW GEORGIA.

that surrounds the island. The natives being conversant with this peculiar habit of his sharkship, skirt the reef in whale boats, on a calm day, their only weapons for the coming fray consisting of a strong rope and a water glass. With the aid of the latter, a large expanse of subaqueous area is unfolded to the view, and, as soon as a protuding tail is seen, one of the crew drops quietly overboard, carrying with him an end of the rope which has previously been made into a running bowline. Then, just as our small boy does with trout, he proceeds to stroke, or rather to tickle the fish, placidly sleeping, with no foreboding of its impending doom. At the same time the native deftly encircles the tail with the fatal noose and ascends with as little delay as possible. Then begins the battle royal. The shark is rudely awakened from his pleasant dreams by what appears no doubt to him the taking of an unwarranted liberty with his caudal extremity. This he naturally resents, but, notwithstanding his giant struggles, he is eventually brought to the surface, and quickly despatched. Such a mode of fishing, of course, would be attended by considerable danger to others than Pacific Islanders. They are, however, such expert swimmers that a shark has no terrors for them. From earliest childhood bathing and sky-larking in the water is one of their principal amusements, consequently they are a match for any fish in its natural element.

When the "Taluni" dropped her anchor off Avarua it was with no pleasant feelings that we contemplated the close of our stay in Raratonga. The beauty of the island, together with the kindliness of the natives, were not its only charms. Always on our minds will be impressed the memory of the many kind attentions shown us by the Government officials and other white residents, whom it was our privilege to meet in this far away isle of the Pacific. Moreover, the

accommodation afforded by, and the treatment received at the "Whare" left nothing to be desired. Many a pleasant hour have I spent on its cool verandah, lazily watching the ocean billows, almost at one's feet, their arched and foaming crests racing onwards towards the fringing, coral reef, to break there in a yeast of snow-white foam, with a resounding roar, that lulls peacefully to sleep the fascinated beholder. The question would continually obtrude itself upon one's mind, how any shore line could withstand for ages, as it has done, without any apparent effect, this everlasting pounding from the almost incalculable forces put in motion by the breaking of these enormous swells that, originating thousands of miles distant, are nowhere to be seen to greater advantage than on an unprotected Pacific isle. Of course the explanation lies in the wonderful work of the coral polyp. This indefatigable toiler, never idle by day nor night, labours unceasingly upon its coral fortress, not only to make good the erosion caused by the breaking waves, but, even, under favourable conditions, to make yet more impregnable its ocean domain.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SOLOMON ISLANDS—DISCOVERY OF AND DESCRIPTION—HEAD HUNTING—NATIVE HOUSES—LACK OF CLOTHING—NATIVE BELIEFS—DEVIL WORSHIP
—WITCHCRAFT—POPULATION DECLINING
CAUSES OF—FAUNA—FLORA

OVERHEAD is an absolutely cloudless, azure sky, a rosy hue upon the eastern horizon heralding the rising sun. The ocean, emerald green, clear as crystal, calm as the surface of a mirror, with not a ripple to disturb its placidity, heaving to a gentle swell, breaks with scarcely a murmur, on Tulagi's coral strand. The land is a succession of low hills and valleys, clothed with a profusion of tropical verdure, and dotted here and there with the neatly thatched dwellings of the native population, embowered in, and almost hidden from view by, the rank undergrowth common to these latitudes.

Such was the peaceful picture that met our gaze from the deck of the "Makambo," on the early morn of the seventh of March, as she dropped anchor in the harbour of Gavutu; such was our introduction to the Solomon Islands—the home of head hunters and cannibalism, the scene of the "cutting out" of many a trading and recruiting vessel with the subsequent massacre of their crews. These were the islands where the lonely, isolated trader, the vanguard of civilisation, has spent a life of peril, paying dearly for any lapse from constant watchfulness of the treacherous native always on the alert for an oppor-

tunity to appease his unsatiable desire to become the possessor of that most valuable and highly prized trophy, the head of a white man, with which to decorate the village "tambo" shrine.

The Solomon Islands were first visited in 1567, by the Spaniard, Mendano, whose chief pilot wrote a very full and interesting description of the different islands stopped at, and also of the inhabitants, who were neither cordial nor peaceful in their reception of the strangers. The very existence of the group, however, was kept a profound secret by the jealous Spanish authorities, who also suppressed the pilot's narrative; with the result that the islands were not re-discovered until two centuries later, when they were again visited by British and French ships of war. The archipelago covers an area of 600 miles in length, running in a north-west and south-east direction between the latitudes of 5 deg. and 11 degrees south of the Equator. The group consists of eight large mountainous islands, of volcanic origin, and of a great number of small coral islets. On Guadalcanar and Bougainville the land rises to a height of from 8,000 to 10,000 feet above sea level.

The physical characteristics of these islands are very similar, consisting of a range of lofty mountains clothed with dense forests and rank tropical undergrowth, here and there giving place to considerable areas of grass land. From the mountains descend numerous streams of considerable volume, at the mouths of which are extensive swamps and low-lying land. The vegetation along the shores consists almost exclusively of mangrove swamps, the haunt of the crocodile.

On Bougainville is Bagana, an active volcano; Savo and Narovo also frequently betray signs of activity. Consequently, as might be anticipated, earthquakes are not uncommon, though they are usually of a slight character.

Great caution has to be observed in navigating amongst the islands, on account of the numerous reefs and "vigias," or reported shoals, of which the exact locality, the very existence even, is often doubtful.

The climate is thoroughly tropical, the temperature ranging from 80 deg. to 90 deg. in the shade; this, combined with the excessively humid atmosphere, makes the conditions, during the day-time somewhat oppressive, though the nights are not at all disagreeable. Fever of a malarial type is prevalent, especially throughout those districts in which there is considerable low lying land, and where, in consequence, mosquitoes are numerous.

At Mr. Norman Wheatley's plantation on the Roviana Lagoon, where the undergrowth has all been cleared away, and there is no stagnant water in which the mosquito can breed, that insect is almost unknown, with the result that attacks of fever are very infrequent.

Cyclonic storms are rare, the group being out of the hurricane belt; though, during certain seasons, strong north-easters are experienced.

The inhabitants are Papuan, though of extremely diversified types, their features ranging all the way from negroid to aquiline. The hair is frizzly and short, with a complexion running from ebon black to almost the light brown of a Polynesian. The dark coloured are usually shore-dwellers, or, as they are called, salt-water dwellers, while those of lighter shades have their homes on the slopes of the inland mountains, and are known as bushmen. Between the two, hostility is the perennial state.

It would appear that there have been at least two distinct tides of immigration to the group, the first of them, in all probability, being a comparatively brown-skinned Papuan, almost as light as his Polynesian brother, but with close, curly hair and negroid features. The remnant of this influx is now almost confined to the

island of Bugutu and the highlands of Malaita. These were followed, it is believed, by a black type, of the same race, but with more aquiline features, who, upon his arrival, being of a better fighting stock, was enabled to drive the former from the coasts and out of the smaller into the hinterland of the larger islands.

Since this displacement took place, notwithstanding the constant hostility of the two types to each other, a slight modification of a certain percentage of both branches of the race must have been constantly going on, through the occasional capture of women in the numerous head-hunting raids which were incessantly being made by each tribe into the territories of the other. As, however, these women were treated as slaves and concubines, and their children regarded as illegitimate, the impression made by them, especially among the aristocracy, is not so great as might have been expected. For instance, the New Georgia tribes were the most inveterate and successful head-hunters of the group—in fact, they nearly depopulated the neighbouring island of Bugutu of its light-complexioned, negroid-featured inhabitants—yet the New Georgia chiefs, together with their families, retain, to a marked degree, the characteristics, coal-black colour, combined with high-typed features peculiar to that portion of the group.

Apart from his physical appearance there is not much to admire in the Solomon Islander, at least, as regards those of the darker types. While not even prepossessing in looks, his character leaves everything to be desired. His disposition, morose and sullen, does not belie the facial expression, which is seldom lighted up with any ray of cheerfulness—he is, in fact, a ferocious, treacherous savage, whose principal and most congenial occupation in the past was head hunting. These raids were organised and carried out with zest, against defenceless and unsuspecting villages, the

inhabitants of which were, as a rule, ruthlessly massacred, neither women nor children being spared. The attack was usually made at the dead of night, so that none of the sleepers might escape, while the sole purpose of these expeditions was to obtain heads for the decoration of a Tambo house, and the supplying of material for cannibalistic feasts, there being very seldom any cause of complaint against the victims.

The Solomon Islander is the personification of laziness. He will do no work, except under compulsion, when, for instance, upon being recruited to labour on a plantation. His whole time is spent in lounging round the village, his sole employment the chewing of beetle-nut. If there are any Solomon Islanders in existence when the angel Gabriel sounds the last dread call, of a surety he will find them busily engaged in this delectable pastime.

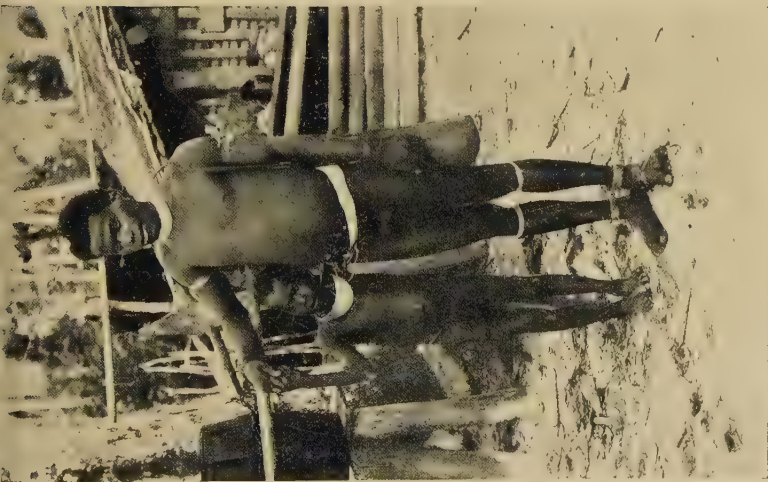
The gardens upon which the principal food supply depends are left entirely to the care of the women. They do the cooking, as well as the housework and looking after the children, so that their time is pretty well occupied; in fact, they are practically slaves. To these duties is also added that of constructing ornaments from pearl and turtle shell, and of plaiting armlets of coloured fibre, with which their lords and masters delight to decorate themselves for the edification of the female portion of the community.

The Solomon Island village is, as a general rule, a poor affair, consisting of a few fairly well made grass houses, constructed of uprights, supporting thatched roofs made from the fronds of the ivory nut palm. The sides are usually formed of roughly plaited mats suspended from the eaves, and the floor, with a few exceptions, is no more than the bare earth. The huts are scattered about, absolutely regardless of any attempt at order, over a clearing in the jungle, which is usually open towards the water. The exception

to this rule is found principally at Bugutu, where the houses are not only artistic in appearance, but are also elevated on posts, the floor, consisting of split bamboo, being usually about six feet from the ground. On some parts of this island are also to be seen dwellings built away up on the forked branches of large trees, access being had to them by light ladders, which can be pulled up on the approach of an enemy. These houses are generally erected in those localities that were most exposed to the head-hunting raids of the festive New Georgians.

Slightly raised sleeping benches are constructed by the owners of the better class of houses, but, as a rule, the occupants content themselves with spreading mats on the damp earth, upon which the sleepers, both male and female, recline, very often in a perfectly nude state. They share their habitation with their domestic animals, so that cleanliness is impossible. Some of the larger houses accommodate, two, or even three, families, who apparently perform their culinary arrangements in common, the cooking being done, usually, in a separate, small building, but quite often in the main dwelling, thereby attracting the ubiquitous house-fly, who is as the sands of the sea in multitude. In fact the fly, by day, and the mosquito at night, combined with periodic attacks of malarial fever, make life on these islands so intolerable a burden that many of the white residents are driven—not wholly inexcusably—to seek oblivion in an over-indulgence in alcohol. To drown in the flowing bowl one's regrets at being exiled there is about the only recreation open to the wretched martyr.

Clothing, on those islands in the group where it is affected, at all, is of a most meagre description, consisting of a strip of pandanus leaf, or a piece of calico passed between the legs, and fastened by both ends to another band tied round the waist. The women,



MARAN NATIVES, SOLOMON ISLANDS.



NATIVE BOY, MAROVO LAGOON, NEW GEORGIA.

[Facing page 76.]



NATIVES, WANA WANA LAGOON,
NEW GEORGIA.



HEAD CHIEF, ROVIANA LAGOON,
NEW GEORGIA.



RAMADA NATIVES, SOLOMON
ISLANDS.

however, who are, if anything, less prepossessing than the men, not satisfied with the lavish manner in which Nature has endowed them in respect to buttocks, add to the simple masculine attire a large bustle, made of tapa, or native cloth, dyed blue, if the wearer be married, or brown if she be single. A widow wears the cloth in its natural colour, a yellowish white. This article of apparel is so arranged that, when squatting, it acts as a cushion upon which the wearer sits. Consequently, the bustle serves not only a useful purpose, but is also considered very ornamental from the female point of view, though how they can see it in that light is a mystery, for it certainly does not add to the symmetry of their forms. But there is no accounting for fashion's vagaries where the female sex is concerned. The ears of children, both male and female, are pierced when young. In the apertures are inserted round pieces of clam shell, about the size of a large pencil, made for that purpose. These are periodically replaced by others of a greater circumference, with the result that, when the adult stage is reached, the hole is extended to a diameter of about three inches. It is no uncommon sight to see a native carrying, in this extension of the lobe of the ear, a quarter-pound empty tobacco tin, which, in some instances, he utilises as a pocket.

On some of the islands the natives of both sexes go about in a Garden of Eden costume, without even the proverbial fig leaf to cover their nakedness; strange to say, they are the most moral of any of the inhabitants of the group, a fact which certainly tends to prove that morality is not altogether dependent upon dress, notwithstanding the idea—the contrary idea, which has had such dire results to the South Sea Islander—held by all missionaries throughout the Pacific.

The religion of the Solomon Islander is a combination of devil and ancestor worship. His idea, apparently,

is that if a beneficent deity exists there is no reason for taking him into consideration, as he will not injure anyone. On the other hand his Satanic Majesty is a constant menace on account of his well-known hostility to mankind and his continual scheming to encompass the undoing of the whole human race. In order to avert this dire calamity he must, of necessity, be placated by every possible means. It will be conceded that, if these propositions are based on sound premises, the conclusions arrived at are quite logical. In pursuance, therefore, of this idea, the only shrines to be found are those dedicated to the devil, and are known as "Tambo" houses. They are usually erected in the vicinity of a village, but, in some instances, on uninhabited islets. These "Tambo" shrines, as a rule, consist of grotesque human figures carved out of wood, though the older ones are occasionally found in stone, with a crocodile expression to the face. They are supposed to represent the Devil, who, judging from those I saw, if the portrayal satisfies him, is assuredly easy to please, for they certainly cannot be termed complimentary. Elevated over the figure, on posts, forming a canopy and surrounding it, are small, grass-thatched houses, filled with skulls of departed relatives, the custom being either to bury the corpse or to expose it in the bush until completely decomposed, when the skull is detached. Offerings consisting of everything the native values most highly, ranging all the way from ancient stone axes to their beautiful shell ornaments, and rings carved from the giant clam, are also to be found in profusion attached to the "Tambo" and surrounding houses. At the isolated, island shrines, are mounds of coral, made of small receptacles, in which have been deposited, from time immemorial, the skulls of those killed in the head-hunting raids; the contents of the result of each fray are in this way kept separate.

The female sex is strictly "tabooed" from visiting a "Tambo" house under any circumstances. I asked Pano, a very intelligent Roviana native, the reason for this prohibition. With a humorous twinkle in his eye he replied, "I no savy—perhaps woman she got plenty debble now. Suppose she go 'tambo' house she get too much debble." Truly Pano must have given considerable study to the character of the gentler sex. Nevertheless he had only some months previously taken unto himself a wife, of whom he appeared to be very proud, besides being quite happy and contented in his married state.

The natives of Savo also worship the shark god, whom they propitiate by casting their dead into the lagoon, to be devoured by that voracious fish, which, in consequence, swarm in the waters in that vicinity, and, with good reason, are greatly feared by the natives. Around the other islands of the group they occasion no concern.

At Makara the crocodile is the principle deity.

On Vella Lavella the islander believes that the spirits of the departed have their abode in Naravo volcano, on Simbo, while strangely enough, the Simbo people and the inhabitants of the other islands look upon the Bougainville volcano as the final resting place of the shades of their deceased friends. Truly a prophet has no honor in his own country. Before taking its departure to the volcano, the spirit hovers round the eaves of the house lately occupied by its mortal tenement. Upon arriving at the celestial destination, before being admitted, a present has to be tendered to the guardian angel, who is called the "Tomati" or spirit. The giving of such offering is deemed sufficient to prove that the deceased was of a generous nature in this sublunary sphere, or, in other words, that he had been an exemplary citizen on earth; meanness, according to the islander, coming in the category of

the unforgiveable sins and *vice versa*. The ultimate destiny of the spirit, if refused admittance, is not apparently revealed in their theology. This purchase of the right to admittance at the gates of the Celestial abode explains why articles of value are deposited at the "Tambo" houses with the head of a deceased relative. The native reasons, that, if he neglects to supply these valuables, the spirit of the departed, unable to pay the required toll to their St. Peter, the keeper of the heavenly gates, will be prevented from passing through. As a consequence, it would, in all probability, return to the locality of its earthly pilgrimage, for the purpose of haunting those, who, by their meanness, were responsible for its inability to liquidate the requisite entrance fee. This dire contingency has therefore to be averted at any cost.

On some of the islands there is also a belief in Elves, or small folk. They are commanded by a chief called Viambuli, and frequent the open glades at the headwaters of the different rivers, where they are to be seen, on moonlight nights, amusing themselves by indulging in the light fantastic. Some of these woodland people are harmless, while others are malignant. Woe betide the unfortunate mortal who, perchance, sees or hears any of the latter. He or she will instantly be struck either blind, or will lose the power of speech.

Belief in witchcraft, or "pouri pouri," is universal amongst Papuans, and is apparently ineradicable, notwithstanding all the efforts of the Government and missionaries to stamp it out. Neither reasoning nor civilising influence will shake the faith of a Papuan in his conviction that certain persons are endowed with the power of "pouri pouri," or, in other words, can cause his death by magical methods, the most common of which are through the deposition of foreign substances in the head or stomach. In almost every village is to be found an old man or woman who is credited with



SANTA AND GIRLS DANCING, SOLOMON ISLANDS.



ROVIANA NATIVES, SOLOMON ISLANDS.



ROVIANA NATIVES, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

[Facing page 80.]



NATIVE OF MAROVO LAGOON, NEW GEORGIA.



VELLA LA VELLA CHIEF, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

possessing this wonderfully dread attribute. All that is necessary to create the impression in the native mind that he is bewitched, is to tell him so, when he happens to be a little "off colour." If the sorcerer then cannot be induced to remove the "pouri pouri" by gifts that it is within the ability of the native to furnish, the latter takes to his sleeping mat, refuses all food, and in a few days departs this life. It is almost impossible to save him. The Government Medical Officer at Samurái, in New Guinea, has found in a few instances, that beneficial results may follow the application of a strong solution of salts of ammonia to the nostrils of the patient; but, as a rule, he is a doomed man, unless the witch doctor intervenes and assures the afflicted one that the "pouri pouri" has been removed.

Were the matter a less serious one, the ridiculous ideas that possess them on this subject would be very humorous. For instance, Mr. Clunn, who has a plantation at Milne Bay, near Samurái, informed me that his head "boy" a most intelligent and valuable man, came to him, one day, and said he was "pouri poured," that he had a pain in his stomach caused through a frying-pan having been deposited in that portion of his anatomy by an old witch doctress residing in a neighbouring village, also that her reward demanded for removing the cause of his trouble was so extravagant as to be utterly beyond his means. Consequently he was going to die. Mr. Clunn, knowing the native character well, at once realised the gravity of the situation, and decided that, if the man's life was to be saved, immediate and drastic measures must be taken. He at once loaded his shot gun, proceeded to the village, called the old woman out into the open, and in lurid language intimated that he was about to blow her to kingdom come for "pouri pouri-ing" his boy. With that he fired above her head, and then, in a deliberate manner, reloaded his weapon, at the same time

assuring her ladyship that a better aim would be taken before the next shot. She at once capitulated, and asked to be allowed to go to the men's quarters, where she would restore the obnoxious kitchen utensil to its proper sphere. Mr. Clunn, after an apparent show of hesitation, agreed to this proposition, upon her also promising never to exercise her malignant powers again upon any of his "boys." The old dame, thereupon, betook herself to the patient's house, and while all alone with him, ostensibly removed a frying pan from his stomach, thereby relieving all pain. The result was that in a few hours he recovered perfectly from his indisposition, while she, with evident triumph, bore away the cause of the trouble, to her own abode, though it happened to be the property of Mr. Clunn. However, he was quite satisfied at having been enabled to save the man's life at so little expense as the loss of a frying pan. Moreover, she has never again troubled any of Mr. Clunn's "boys," having since confined her "pouri pouri" powers to afflicting her own people with most remarkable complaints, the curing of which, no doubt, affords her quite a good and easy livelihood.

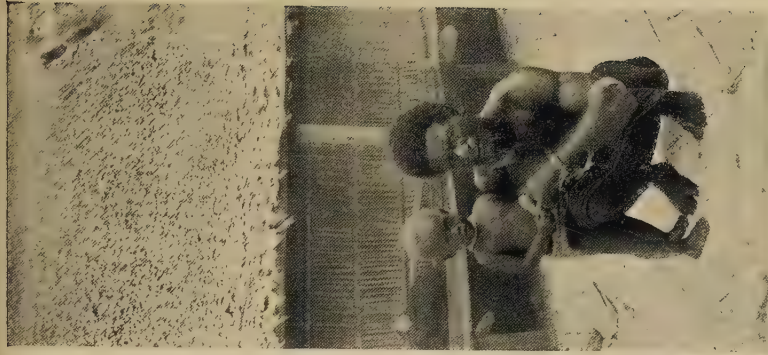
The Solomon Island marriage service is beautiful in its simplicity. When a youth, enamoured of a dusky maid, considers that, in the interests of the race, the time has arrived when he should join the army of benedicts, negotiations are opened up with the father, if alive, or, if he be dead, then with the lady's nearest relative, with a view to purchasing his "inamorata," whose feelings in the matter are completely ignored. Upon satisfactory terms being arrived at, the bride, with her trousseau, consisting of clam-shell armlets, and, perchance, a new bustle, is delivered to the house of the bridegroom, when a feast is prepared and partaken of by the relations and friends of both parties. This constitutes the marriage ceremony. From that time onwards, the husband, as a rule, lives a life of



TRADER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW,
ROVIANA LAGOON,
NEW GEORGIA.



BUGUTU GIRL, SOLOMON
ISLANDS.



PANO AND CHILD, ROVIANA
LAGOON, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

[Facing page 82.

OLD MEN, RAMADA LAGOON,
SOLOMON ISLANDS.



NATIVE FAMILY,
WANA WANA, NEW GEORGIA.



ROVIANA CHIEF,
SOLOMON ISLANDS.



ease ; all the household duties, which, however, are not of a very onerous character, as well as the necessary work in connection with the food gardens, as before stated, being performed by the wife, who, in a very short time, loses any prepossessing looks she may have had.

There is no homogeneity amongst the inhabitants of the different islands in the group. Each tribes occupies a well defined district, and woe betide any reckless or thoughtless native who, designedly, or through inadvertence, wanders across the boundary into the territory of an adjacent clan. His body—cannibalism being still in vogue—will go towards building up the bone and tissue of those of a certain number of his neighbours, while his head will constitute an added ornament to their “ tambo ” or devil’s house.

The greatest desideratum of a Solomon Island native being a white man’s head, he will risk almost anything, even his wife’s relations, to obtain that coveted prize. No matter how considerate the isolated trader has been in his business dealings with this Papuan savage, everlasting vigilance on the part of the former is absolutely necessary against the treachery of those even who are under the greatest obligations to him, if a sudden and violent end is to be escaped. In this cannibalistic and homicidal land the Angel of Death is continually hovering round the white man’s devoted head.

Of course this state of affairs has been greatly modified on those islands where there has been a considerable intercourse with the whites. Though every native is yet, in reality, a potential murderer, on account of his bloodthirsty character and unnatural desire for human food and heads. He has been taught, however, by drastic methods, which are not likely to be forgotten, that the time-honoured custom of massacring all and everyone over whom he could

treacherously obtain an advantage cannot any longer be observed with impunity ; and will not be tolerated in the future. But there are islands and districts in the group, notably Malaita, of which more anon, where head-hunting is still rife, and no native even is safe out of his own territory, while the white man carries his life in his hands. The European, I noticed, invariably goes about armed, even on the supposedly safest islands, a fact which shews how slight is his confidence in the apparent peacefulness of the native.

With the few exceptions in which old conditions still exist, the population of the different islands is slowly but surely decreasing year by year. Contact with the white man and his vices has been a principal cause of this decline. But other forces have been at work. The introduction of firearms, adoption, in some districts, of clothing, together with a partial use of foreign foods, have all acted as contributories towards creating a new environment to which the native physique is apparently unable to accommodate itself. Also, strange as the statement may appear, the abandonment of head-hunting by those tribes which were mostly addicted to it, has had a very deleterious effect upon them. Head-hunting constituted practically the only exercise of quite a large percentage of the male portion of the community ; it also necessitated the building of large war canoes, and the manufacture of weapons of offence and defence, besides affording strenuous employment, both physical and mental, to those engaged in the raids. These men, having now no longer any particular object in life, wander about the villages, listlessly indifferent to everything, with the not surprising result that a loss of bodily vigour soon follows upon the track of so aimless an existence.

What a contrast to the above described mental characteristics of the Solomon Islands Papuan and his conditions of life, are those of his Polynesian



AOLA NATIVES, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

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BUGUTU GIRLS, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

neighbour on the Islands to the Eastward. There the native, though brave and a born fighter, was seldom treacherous. He is ever cheerful, happy, and contented, quite satisfied, when his few bodily wants are supplied, to spend his days in dancing and making himself agreeable to his neighbours. His house is well built and comfortable, while in cleanliness—both as regards the persons occupying it and the abode—it could not be surpassed. What a pity that he, too, as well as the lower Papuan type, appears to be doomed inevitably to extinction through contact with the more virile white race, in accordance with that immutable law of evolution, the survival of the fittest.

The Solomon Island group is, perhaps, the most fertile of any in the Pacific. In favourable locations the cocoa-nut palm comes into bearing within four or five years after planting. Rubber, tobacco, cotton, coffee, vanilla, cocoa, and tapioca, all do well, while tropical fruits of every description grow wild in profusion. At the present time the exports are practically limited to copra and ivory nuts, the latter being the fruit of the sago palm. Hitherto, the supply of these has been obtained from the natives through the medium of private traders, but the business is slowly, though surely, passing from their hands into the control of large companies who are planting extensive areas with cocoa-nuts throughout the different islands in the group. As regards the ivory nut, though the demand for it, principally from Germany, is increasing continually, the raising of them will probably be confined to the native population on account of the peculiarity of this palm, which dies after bearing one crop of nuts, usually upon reaching maturity in the sixth year after planting.

The fauna of the islands are few in number—wild pigs, the opossum, flying fox, iguana, crocodile, and a small indigenous rat. Birds are numerous, consisting

principally of cockatoos, parrots, paraquets of a most brilliant plumage, the horn-bill, pigeons, the curlew, blue herons, and a bush fowl about as large as an average sized domestic hen. This last mentioned bird is a phenomenal layer of eggs as large as those of a turkey. That it has plenty of leisure in which to perform this operation is apparent from the fact that the eggs are deposited in a hole scraped in the sand, and then left to their fate, to be hatched only by the heat of the sun. The chicks, as soon as they emerge from the cell, work their way to the surface, and at once forage for a living, without the aid of a parent.

Butterflies and moths of a gorgeous colouring and immense size are numerous, while cockroaches as large as humming birds swarm everywhere. Some of the butterflies measure as much as eight inches between the tips of their fully expanded wings.

The waters swarm with all kinds of tropical fish, many of them most weird in shape, and almost all vividly coloured. Sharks are numerous, but do not appear to be dreaded by the natives, who bathe freely in the lagoons.

CHAPTER X

ARRIVAL AT TULAGAI—CURIO COLLECTING—ROVIANA
LAGOON—DEVIL HOUSE—STONE IMPLEMENTS—
EVIDENCES OF A PRE-PAPUAN RACE—WAR
CANOES—HEAD-HUNTING—MISSIONS—
SEMI-COMMERCIAL—RIDICULOUS
METHODS

UPON our arrival at Tulagi it was at first decided to leave the "Mokambo" at that port, and visit the different islands in the group, by means of trading vessels. With this object in view I interviewed the captain of the "Helen Jackson," a schooner that was about to leave for Malaita. After making satisfactory arrangements with him, upon consulting Mr. Mahaffy, the Assistant High Commissioner, who was in Tulagi at the time, he strongly advised me, if possible, to make other arrangements. The vessel was very old and slow, he said, and therefore the trip would be a tedious one. Moreover, he kindly offered to give me a letter of introduction to Norman Wheatley, who, with his gasoline launch, was awaiting the arrival of the steamer at Gizo, preparatory to going on a trading cruise through the western islands. We eventually decided to follow his advice, and, upon reaching that port, had no difficulty in coming to terms with Mr. Wheatley, or "Norman," the name by which he is known throughout the group, and shall be designated in the coming pages. He is the oldest trader in the Solomon Islands, and possesses so great a fund of information about them and their inhabitants that I could not have struck a better guide.

Having transferred our belongings to his launch, the "Roviana," sail was at once set, and, under a favourable breeze, with the assistance of her gasoline engine, Norman's chief station, Lambetta, in the Roviana lagoon, in New Georgia, where his family reside, was reached on the following day.

The estate is beautifully situated at the mouth of the lagoon facing a chain of islets upon the reef with Mount Rendova away in the distance, forming a background of rugged grandeur to the quiet and peaceful tropic scene.

At the entrance to the lagoon, on the barrier reef, is a densely wooded coral isle, notable from the fact that upon this island the first permanent trading station in the group was established by Messrs. Woodhouse and Frank Wickham. The former now lies at peace on a knoll overlooking Giza harbour, while the latter is enjoying a well-earned rest at Sydney.

How these two men preserved their lives during the years they spent upon that lonely isle is a marvel, surrounded as they were by treacherous New Georgian savages, the most inveterate head-hunters of the Pacific. Eternal vigilance must have been their watchword. On guard night and day, year after year, what iron nerves they must have been possessed of to enable them to stand such a constant strain. And yet, notwithstanding all the dangers incidental to their occupation, they, according to their account, appeared to have positively enjoyed what most men would have considered a miserable existence. I presume that the freedom and unconventionality of island life compensated them for the lack of safety, and of the luxuries of civilisation.

The waters surrounding this particular island are frequented for some reason by immense shoals of mullet, a fish very much sought after. The usual mode of catching them is by stunning them with dynamite.

This is illegal, but the ordinance is more often honoured in the breach than in the observance.

Early in the morning the trader puts off in a canoe, accompanied by a native, who does the paddling. When a shoal of fish approaches within throwing distance a stick of dynamite attached to a fuse is cast into the midst of them. Woe betide the fisherman, however, if, as sometimes happens, he delays too long in throwing the explosive after lighting the fuse. His earthly career is brought to a sudden termination. But if the right moment is chosen—that is when the quarry are close together—a fine haul will be secured. He does not, however, always reap his full measure of reward. Competitors almost invariably appear on the scene, in the shape of numerous sharks, who have learned by experience that the concussion means a good meal to them. On one occasion I saw a regular tug-of-war between the native boatman and a shark over a particularly desirable fish. The former hung on to the head, while the latter had the tail together with a goodly portion of the body in his capacious maw. It ended in a fairly equal division of the spoil between the two antagonists.

As Norman had shortly to return to Gizo, in order to meet the east-bound steamer, we decided to spend the time until his return in exploring the numerous villages round the lagoon in collecting curios, taking photographs, and obtaining data regarding the life and customs of the people—a most interesting study, considering that they and their ancestors were the most warlike and turbulent of any in the group.

For this purpose a good boat was placed at our disposal, captained by one Pano, a very reliable Roviana native, as black as coal, whose English was considerable, though of a somewhat peculiar character. For instance, he came to me on one occasion, and asked “ You got one trowers b’long knife ? ” This was certainly a poser

For the life of me I could not understand what he wanted. Eventually, however, he succeeded in making me comprehend that what he meant was a "sheath" in which to carry his knife. I soon realised that Pano was quite a character. His face may be well described as "childlike and bland," but any one who judged that gentleman's disposition by his facial expression would make a fatal error. He has taken part in most of the raids that have disgraced the administration, and, from all accounts, conclusively proved by his actions that his civilisation is merely skin deep. Some two years ago he embraced Christianity, and joined the Methodist Mission, but, following a dispute with the missionary, relapsed to the faith of his forefathers, and eventually became an Agnostic. His spiritual state may be best described by the reply he gave to my query, on our first visit to a "tambo" house, whether he believed in a personal devil. His face became a study; it was wreathed in a sceptical smile, as he ejaculated, "Me b'long no religion—all same white man." Moreover, if it had not been for the other native, who accompanied us, and who watched our movements closely, I have no doubt that Pano would have been quite prepared to assist me in carrying off the "tambo" with all its belongings. As it was, I succeeded, with his connivance, in abstracting a few very interesting offerings from the Satanic shrine.

The results of my curio-collecting expeditions round the lagoon were certainly very gratifying. I secured a large number of finely carved spears, clubs, and grotesque canoe gods, inlaid with pearl shell, also several of the beautifully-made New Georgia shields, as well as a great variety of personal ornaments and household utensils. But my most valuable finds were a black stone food masher, one end carved into a female head with inlaid, pearl, shell eyes; also a woman's bust in ebony decorated with inlaid shell, the head

being surmounted with real human hair. The native owner of the former could give no idea as to its history. All he could say was that no one in the village knew from whence it came,—that not even the oldest inhabitant had ever heard or known of stone food mashers being used, that, from time immemorial, these household implements had been made of hard wood of a conventional type, entirely different to that of the stone one, also that the consensus of belief was that the Gods had made it. I am therefore of opinion that it is a relict left by a megalithic people (a term used by Doctor McMillan Brown in his “Maori and Polynesian,” to denote a stone-building race) whom I believe to have been residents of these islands prior to the advent of the present Papuan inhabitants, who displaced them. Evidences exist all over the Pacific that these southern isles were the home of such a people, before they were occupied by the Polynesian and Papuan, who are comparatively new arrivals. As regards the woman’s bust, there are only two old men left in the group who now do this kind of work, which is really most artistic ; so that, without doubt, it will very shortly become a lost art. After several ineffectual attempts to obtain these two valuable articles, I enlisted Mr. Wheatley’s services, with the result that I eventually secured them.

All the villages visited being situated near the waters of the lagoon, my *modus operandi* in these curio hunting expeditions was as follows :—

The boat having been run ashore on the beach, I would stroll up to the nearest dwelling, accompanied by the faithful Pano, and keeping an eye upon the army of more than half-starved curs that prowl round these villages, seeking what they may devour, whether it be garbage or the calf of a stranger’s leg caught unawares. Having surveyed the exterior of the house, as a kind of introduction, I would enter, and, without

waiting for the formality of an introduction, would sit down on anything that could be found suitable for such a purpose. Unlike the Polynesian, who, under the same circumstances, would at once come forward and welcome the visitor with a cheerful smile and outstretched hand, the Solomon Islander never moves from his squatting position, but, with sullen expression, glowers at one, as if nothing would please him better than to grace his festive board with the intruder's body. If a stick of tobacco be handed him as a peace offering, the gift will produce no apparent effect; it is simply accepted, without a murmur of thanks, or the slightest signs of gratitude. My only recourse, therefore, was to wait until my eyes had become accustomed to the darkness of the interior, unrelieved, except by the small door at one end, the only aperture through which light can penetrate. I would then proceed to roam round, and, upon discovering anything of interest, would hand it to Pano, who thereupon would enquire of the supposed owner whether he wanted to dispose of it, and, if so, at what price. In the event of his being willing to sell the article in question, he would ask about double what he was prepared to accept, a method which always necessitated interminable bargaining before a sale was effected. When, however, for any reason, the owner did not care to part with an article, the invariable reply would be "He b'long other man, other man no here." That settled it. This procedure had to be gone through in every house, of any importance, in the village. Occasionally, after purchasing, for instance, an ancient stone adze, or other implement of considerable interest to me, but of absolutely no value in the estimation of the natives, I judged, by the look of surprise upon their faces, that they believed themselves to be dealing with a lunatic—that no sane person would take the trouble to come the distance I had, for the pur-



VILLAGE SCENE, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

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AOLA VILLAGE, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

pose of exchanging good money and tobacco for *such useless* "truck." Then, thinking evidently that they had struck a "bonanza" in me, they would take the trouble to hunt up and offer old and almost forgotten articles, which I obtained for a mere song.

While skirting the shore of the lagoon on one of these expeditions, the sound of continual tapping was heard in the bush. Pano, when appealed to for an explanation, informed us that "some girls b'long village he make cloth." It was accordingly decided to investigate this native manufactory, and the boat was therefore beached near to the locality from which the sounds proceeded. The result of a cautious reconnoitre was that we came unexpectedly upon a bevy of young girls, sitting round a pool, arrayed in practically an Edenic garb, busily engaged in making "tapa," or native cloth. The moment we appeared on the scene, they, with screams of excitement and surprise, disappeared into the bush as if by magic. However, feminine curiosity, and Pano's wiles, very soon overcame their timidity, and they returned one by one to their work, thereby affording us an exhibition of how this interesting fabric is manufactured. It is made from the inside bark of a species of mulberry, which is first reduced to a pulpy mass, and then beaten into a paper-like material by the aid of round, hard wood mallets, specially constructed for that purpose. After this process, it is dried and stained into different colors with native dyes obtained from roots and shrubs. This Papuan cloth is not as substantial, nor is it to be compared, as regards fineness of texture, with that made throughout Polynesia, neither has the Solomon Islander discovered the art of ornamenting it by the process of stencillation universally practised by his Polynesian brethren.

In every village visited, I noticed, usually in the large canoe house, a huge trough, between thirty and

forty feet long, carved out of a solid log, and fashioned to represent either a shark or a crocodile. These are used as receptacles for, and in them are mashed, the immense quantity of food, consisting of sweet potatoes, rice, and taro, that is required when one village is entertaining another to a feast. The wooden mashers, made of hard wood, are quite works of art.

Often when thus engaged, surrounded by these practical savages, I could not suppress a "creepy" feeling coming over me when I allowed myself to remember that only a few years ago this Roviana lagoon was a den of pirates, and that its inhabitants were the most enterprising, and energetic, head-hunting, savage cannibals in all the Western Pacific. Moreover, it is believed by those who are in a position to know, that they still, secretly, when opportunity offers, indulge their depraved appetites for human flesh, while there is little doubt that women are yet occasionally slaughtered over the graves of their deceased husbands.

Head-hunting was finally stopped a few years ago by the destruction of their large war canoes—vessels made of hewn planks sewed together with rattan, the seams being pitched with a black resinous gum obtained from the sap of an indigenous tree. These canoes were beautifully decorated, and inlaid with pearl shell. They were dedicated in every instance to the canoe god, by the sacrifice, at launching, of one or more human victims, a grotesquely carved representation of that deity being also attached to the prow. I was fortunate enough to secure three of these latter, though the natives were very loth to part with them. Some of these canoes were large enough to hold as many as a hundred warriors, and as quite a fleet of them embarked on any important expedition against a place of considerable size, the inhabitants of the devoted village had little chance of saving their lives, the attack



DEVIL HOUSE, ROVIANA LAGOON,
NEW GEORGIA.



BUGUTU NATIVES,
SOLOMON ISLANDS.

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RENDOVA GIRL AND BOY,
SOLOMON ISLANDS.



being almost invariably made in the dead of night. The biter, however, was sometimes very badly bitten. For instance, some years ago a large New Georgia party sailed away on a marauding, head-hunting expedition to Bugutu, leaving their village almost denuded of able-bodied men. This latter island had been, from time immemorial, the happy hunting ground of the Roviana warrior. In fact the raids upon these unfortunate people had become so incessant as to compel those living in the most exposed situations to become arboreal dwellers, in order to escape complete extermination. While this war party was engaged in its beneficent designs upon Bugutu, their rivals in the head-hunting industry, the Simbo people, embraced the opportunity to make a descent upon the defenceless New Georgian village, by which they were enabled to add to their "tambo" collection a large number of heads of women and children, and to prove thereby that honour does not always exist among thieves.

A certain church of Australasia has its chief Mission in one of the central islands of the group, some miles distant from Mr. Wheatley's plantation. It is in charge of a gentleman, who, I consider, mistook his vocation when he decided to become a missionary. He would have amassed a competence in any business in a civilised community. The mission is a concern apparently conducted as a copra-raising, property-acquiring, and commercial undertaking, incidentally ready to save the soul of any stray heathen who may "happen along," desirous of becoming a faithful worker in the Vineyard of the Lord, or—in other words—the Mission Copra Plantation.

There are four other societies operating among these islands, each assuring the bewildered native that its particular brand of Christianity is the only original genuine one, by the acceptance of which, and no other, can an entrance be gained through the pearly gates,

and salvation thereby assured. He also does not fail to intimate that the kind tendered by his competitors in the mission business is not "just as good," and warns the islander of the fatal mistake he will make should any other form of Christianity be embraced. No wonder the thinking and intelligent native turns away in disgust, characterising them all as fakes, especially when he sees the Government Official, trader, and traveller treating the missionary with aversion, and his theology with contempt.

These missions are entirely supported by subscriptions from pious old ladies bountifully endowed with this world's goods, but lacking in wisdom, and by donations from religious fanatics, and the hard-earned wages of neurotic servant girls emotionally inclined. The hundreds of thousands of pounds so obtained, now thrown away in maintaining these missions, could be well and beneficially expended in relieving the distress of many of our own kith and kin, as well as in civilising the white savage at home, who, as regards moral turpitude and material misery, is in a worse condition than that of any islander in the South Pacific.

But the worse feature of this mission business is the fact that the vast sums so realised are mostly obtained by wilfully false pretences on the part of the smug missionary, who, in his letters and reports to the religious periodicals, portrays a life of hardship and danger, which he gladly undergoes, being well recompensed by the wonderful success he is experiencing in the Lord's work of "delivering the land from error's chains." The real facts of the case, however, are that, in most instances, he leads a life of ease, idleness, and comparative luxury, making a far better livelihood than his abilities would earn for him in any civilised state of society. As for the number of heathen souls he is instrumental in saving, that, to use a mild



GROUP OF NATIVES, RAMADA LAGOON.
TWO ON THE LOWER LEFT ARE THE MURDERERS OF OLIVER BURNS.
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AUKI VILLAGE, MALAITA, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

expression, is grossly exaggerated. Besides, it is an undisputed fact, well known to all white residents throughout the Pacific, that a large percentage of the so-called converts to Christianity are recruited from the lower class of native, through a most open system of bribery, by means of gifts of tobacco and rice. A good showing must be made, at any cost, otherwise supplies would be cut off. This explains why so many native converts fall away from grace, and revert to the faith of their forefathers.

In corroboration of my views on this missionary subject, a very high Government official residing on one of the Island groups, after reading "Thro' Tropic Seas," writes me as follows :—

"I was very much interested in your remarks upon the London Missionary Society, which are true to the very life. I, myself, have experienced the true character of these so-called Missionaries, who sacrifice their lives in what they deem to be the uplifting of the native, and after years of a very pleasant sojourn, living on the fat of the land, with a good pension to look forward to, avail themselves of the hard earned privilege of returning to Europe for a couple of years to lecture on the roughness of their lives amongst the heathen and their hair-breadth escapes by land and sea. This, of course, means the collection of vast sums of money from soft-hearted persons living in civilisation."

"I think myself, that if these generous people residing in England, America and Canada, knew how happy and contented the natives of Polynesia really are, they would divert their wealth to the uplifting of our own poor children in crowded civilisation."

Upon the Sunday following our arrival at Lambetta, I attended service at a mission church, a grass building covered with thatch. The congregation consisted solely of "boys" employed on the mission plantation,

and a few half-caste girl boarders. Not a single native from the adjacent villages was in attendance. The missionary being absent, his place was taken by a Samoan teacher, who gave a very deep discourse upon the subject of the Trinity. He proved apparently to his own satisfaction how simple it was and easy to understand, but, judging from the faces of the congregation, I am inclined to believe he would have made as good an impression upon his native audience if the sermon had been delivered in Hebrew. It is scarcely credible that any intelligent civilised body of men can imagine, for one moment, that a number of savages just emerging from the Neolithic state can be edified or improved by being preached to upon the doctrine of the Trinity, a doctrine that even those of our own race who accept it never attempt to explain.

Subsequently I paid a visit to the mission house, a large, commodious building, well furnished, and supplied with all modern conveniences, in striking contrast to the House of the Lord that I had just left. From a long conversation I had with one of the missionaries, they appeared to be quite satisfied with the progress they were making; in what respect he did not enlighten me. Judging, however, from the absence of natives at the service I had just attended excepting those employed by the mission, I was obliged to conclude that he referred to the commercial and land-acquiring branch of the undertaking, not to the conversion of the New Georgian from devil-worship, or to the improvement of his material state.

He also informed me that the Samoan teacher who had so learnedly expounded the doctrine of the Trinity on the Sunday, and who, I might mention by the way, lived some distance down the lagoon in a no higher state than the native, was a mathematical and musical genius, also that he had pupils at the mission school, proficient in all the higher branches of the former

science. I suggested that, in my opinion, it would be far better if the education of the native was confined to the three "R's" supplemented by a training in mechanics; also that he should be taught the benefits of being clean, provident, and industrious. He did not agree with me, his idea being that a course of higher education tended to develop his intellect. What use such knowledge could be put to, when the recipient returned to his village, is a mystery which I am unable to solve.

He then entered into a tirade against the Government, on account of its iniquitous treatment of the native in the past, also for playing into the hands of certain traders, thereby leading the islander to believe that the latter were all-powerful with the authorities, and, in that way, injuring the prestige of the missionary. He also informed me that the mission had collected facts, covering a number of years, relating to the atrocities perpetrated by, or with the connivance of, the authorities, in connection with the different raids that had taken place upon native villages during that period; moreover, that the Government had been advised that it was the intention of the mission to publish full particulars of these atrocities in the public press.

I may state also that I believe the authorities had been so advised, because no other hypothesis will explain the reasons for a number of, otherwise inexplicable, actions, which will be related fully in a subsequent chapter, carried out by the Government while I was in the group.

Another of the semi-commercial missions is the Evangelical of Queensland (whatever that term may mean), operating principally on the island of Malaita, amongst the returned "boys" deported from the Australian sugar plantations. It is on the most friendly terms with a concern called the Malaita

Trading Company. How close these relations are it is difficult to say ; but certainly they are so intimate that the people who operate the mission are credited with being financially interested in the trading company, and it is alleged, allow the mission vessel, the "Evangel," to cruise round the eastern portion of the group, collecting copra and ivory nuts in the interests of the shareholders of the commercial branch of the enterprise, when she ought to be attending to the mission work for which she was built by funds, raised largely from the public, for that purpose.

The unfairness of the competition waged by these joint missions and commercial concerns against legitimate traders will be easily realised. The unsophisticated native naturally looks upon the two as one and the same institution. Consequently, when, for instance, a mission vessel drops anchor at a village, and the Lord's annointed, in the shape of a commercial missionary, comes ashore, those of the natives who are at all under mission influence accept as gospel everything that he tells them. His *modus operandi* is simple but efficacious. He calls upon the villager, who at the time happens to have the most copra or nuts to sell. "How much this fellow white man," alluding to the local trader, "b'long here he pay you b'long copra?" Upon the Islander answering that "fellow white man he pay ten cocoa-nut one stick tobacco," the missionary trader, relying upon being able to recoup himself in some other future transaction with the native, for the loss he will sustain by paying at least double the value of copra—a realization which he invariably subsequently accomplishes by some underhand method, replies: "All right, me pay you two stick—that fellow white man he cheat—me b'long mission, me look b'long you, me no savvy cheat, suppose you sell me copra all same b'long Lord." This is a fair example, which has also the merit of having actually occurred, of how the



NATIVES OF MALAITA, SOLOMON ISLANDS. MEN AND WOMEN ON THIS ISLAND
GO ABSOLUTELY NAKED.

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WOMEN EATING SUGAR, VELLA LA VELLA, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

missionary assists his trading partner, and charitably, at the same time, blasts the character of the legitimate trader. Is it therefore to be wondered at that the missionary is universally despised by all self-respecting white men resident throughout the South Pacific?

Upon Mr. Wheatley's return to Lambetta, it was with a semi-official authority from the Government to proceed to Grassi, in Ramada lagoon, on New Georgia, for the purpose of securing, if possible, two of the three men who were implicated a short time previously in the treacherous murder of a trader, Oliver Burns. The third man and actual murderer, Lanasse, had been betrayed and handed over to Norman by a portion of the former's own clan, which, on account of a tribal dispute, had become divided into two factions.

In the next chapter will be related the circumstances that led up to, and particulars of that murder, followed by an account of Wheatley's expedition to the Ramada lagoon, in which I took a part.

CHAPTER XI

THE RAMADA LAGOON — GRASSI — CENTIPEDES — THE
MAROVO LAGOON—CHIEF ARA—HIS DEATH—LELA
—MURDER OF OLIVER BURNS—LANASSE—
OUTRAGES ON NATIVES—NATIVE REPRISALS

GRASSI, the home of the murderers of Oliver Burns, is situated in the Ramada lagoon, on the north-east side of New Georgia, almost opposite to, and about 60 miles distant from Lambetta, Mr. Wheatley's house. In order to accomplish the journey in one day with the launch, a very early start was made; in fact, it was scarcely daybreak when we steamed out of the lagoon.

On account of the very hazardous nature of the undertaking about to be engaged in, and the lawlessness of the natives of that part of New Georgia to which we were bound, Norman thought it advisable to have another trader with us—Mr. Cruickshank, from Faisi—so that the party consisted of four white men and the crew of Malaita "boys," all of whom had been in Mr. Wheatley's employ for some years, and, consequently, could be depended upon to give a good account of themselves in the event of an emergency.

As soon as we were clear of the tortuous passage leading to the Roviana lagoon, a fine fair wind was encountered, under which the trim little vessel bowled along at about an eight hour pace, just fast enough to afford me some fine sport fishing with a trolling line. My catch consisted of four large king fish, a sea pike, and lastly a huge, blunt-headed silvery fish called by the natives "veu." When the latter took the hook

I really thought my line had become entangled on a coral rock, so sudden was the jerk—so unexpected, in fact, that, having a turn of the line round my hand, I nearly went over the stern of the boat. Norman, however, seeing my predicament, at once slowed down ; even then it took two strong men to haul in the prize. This finished my day's sport, it being considered inadvisable to lose time through any more stoppages if Grassi was to be reached that day.

Just about sundown the wind dropped ; but, with the motor engine running at half speed, we managed to make our way through the narrow channel, into the Ramada lagoon, before the darkness had hidden everything from view. There is virtually no twilight in the tropics, the night following day with a quickness which appears very strange to one from high northern latitudes.

Mr. Wheatley's trading station was shortly reached, and, as there were no lights visible on shore, he fired a volley with his revolver, to announce our arrival, as well as to awaken his manager, Mr. Bennett. Quite a time elapsed, however, before the latter put in an appearance. It transpired that, as our coming was unexpected, and being in daily apprehension of an attack by the natives, he, upon hearing the noise of the firing, concluded that they were making a midnight raid upon the station. His relief of mind can be imagined when he could just discern the outline of the launch anchored close to the wharf, and realised that, instead of having to repel enemies, the monotony of his lonely existence was about to be broken, for a few days at least, by meeting with friends and hearing the latest news from the outside world.

It is not surprising, therefore, that our reception was warm, and of the most cordial character. Moreover, upon our going ashore we found the house, besides being loopholed in all directions, thoroughly protected by a high, barbed-wire fence, shewing that,

in Mr. Bennett's opinion, the natives were not to be trusted—a conviction which, from what I saw of them, appeared to be quite justified.

Upon the nature of our mission being imparted to Mr. Bennett, and after thoroughly discussing the question as to the best means to be employed to attain our object, it was decided that a messenger should be despatched that night to the native village, for the purpose of inviting a deputation of the principal men to meet Mr. Wheatley in the morning. This was accordingly done.

Having settled this point, we betook ourselves to our respective couches, consisting of mats spread on the verandah—the usual practice throughout the group. One soon becomes accustomed to the hardness of such a bed, and I anticipated a good night's rest, being somewhat wearied by the twelve hours' passage on the launch. This expectation failed to materialise. About the middle of the night I was startled into wakefulness by a noise caused by the precipitation from the thatched roof of some solid body falling in the neighbourhood of my head. Having called Mr. Bennett's attention to the fact, he procured a light, when, to my horror, the disturbing element was found close to my pillow, and proved to be a centipede, which, in size, dwarfed any that I had previously seen or heard of. With the aid of a pair of pinchers it was quickly deposited in a jar of good "Scotch." This very hospitable treatment on our part soon rendered it quite innocuous. Next morning, though contracted somewhat by over-indulgence in alcohol, it still measured slightly over *eleven* inches.

This episode, as may be surmised, decided all of the party, with the exception of Norman, to abandon any further attempts to sleep. He, however, after remarking that all the vermin on New Georgia had no terrors for him, was soon oblivious to things mundane, while

the two traders, over a bottle of "John Dewar," regaled us, until daybreak, with wonderful stories of centipedes and scorpions, the size of which increased in proportion to the quantity of liquid refreshment imbibed. The memory of the first night spent at Grassi—by no means a pleasant one—is indelibly impressed upon my mind.

The sun was scarcely above the horizon before a number of canoes arrived, with the head man and principal natives of Ramada, when a conference took place between them and Mr. Wheatley. Before detailing the results of this meeting, I will narrate, by way of a digression, the chief circumstances that led to the murder of Oliver Burns, as well as the subsequent lawlessness of the Ramada and Marovo people. At the same time I will give an account of that tragedy.

The Marovo lagoon, the inhabitants of which are intimately connected with those of Ramada, is the resort of a notorious, and very much wanted, chief—Lela, who is also sorcerer of the district. His story is illustrative of the impotence of the authorities to punish crime, in this group. The result is that the arm of the law has been superseded by a system of "vendetta," such as is common upon the island of Corsica. When, therefore, some two years ago, Lela's brother Ara suffered greatly at the hands of a neighbouring tribe, who raided his village, destroyed his property, carried away one of his wives, and slaughtered some of his relatives, in default of the authorities punishing the depredators, he was compelled to inaugurate a campaign against them on his own account. Before doing so he laid the whole matter before the Government, and asked that permission be granted to avenge himself by "carrying the war into Africa." The authorities, instead of at once taking steps to apprehend the murderers of Ara's kinsfolk, favoured

him with some ambiguous advice, which he construed as an authorisation to take the law into his own hands. Thereupon, aided by a band of followers, he proceeded with his contemplated raid into the territory of the aggressors, in the course of which some eight or ten of his enemies were despatched to that abode from which there is no return, while Ara's village "tambo" shrine was enriched by so many more reeking skulls.

That Ara was quite sincere in his contention that the raid had been made under Government sanction is proved by the fact that he made no attempt to conceal these proceedings on his part, but, on the contrary, reported them to the authorities. Moreover, it appears to me that he was quite justified in acting as he did. The Government had abrogated native law, but, at the same time, was either unable or too diffident to enforce its own code, which had nominally superseded the former; consequently the only recourse open to the islander who suffered by breaches of the law was a return to native procedure.

But poor Ara, apparently, was blissfully ignorant of the devious methods employed in their treatment of the barbarous native, by the civilised white men, who were at that time, and are now, in control of the destinies of the Solomon Islands. One can imagine his feelings, therefore, when he was arrested for murder, and confined, heavily ironed, in Tulagi gaol. He appears to have brooded to such an extent over the rank injustice of the treatment meted out to him that his mind became unhinged, with the result that he put an end to all his troubles, and terminated his earthly career by strangling himself in his cell.

Act two of this island drama commences with the entrance upon the scene of brother Lela, a man of an entirely different character. Of good physique and brave, imbued with all the savage instincts, as well as with some slight sense of humour, a characteristic very

uncommon with natives, he was crafty and cunning. The influences governing Lela's course of conduct are, first, the primitive Hebraic principle of "an eye for an eye—a tooth for a tooth," and, secondly, an inordinate longing for the possession of a white man's head, to add to his already numerous collection of skulls. So obsessed was he with this desire, that it had become a mania, in the pursuit of which he was prepared to run any risk.

Consequently, upon receiving the news of his brother's ignominious and tragic end, he realised that this was the long waited-for excuse and opportunity to gain his object; and an agitation was at once inaugurated by him amongst his tribesmen for the purpose of obtaining satisfaction from those who were responsible for Ara's death. At the same time, on the high authority of a renowned sorcerer, he artfully laid down the law that, according to island theology, his brother's ghost would wander to and fro, calling for vengeance, and haunting friends and relatives, until such time as it should be placated by a suitable sacrifice. He asserted, also, that nothing short of a European head would pacify the restless spirit. It was eventually decided, therefore, that the departed Ara would have to be accommodated in that respect.

The important question remaining to be decided was, which white man they should honour with their benevolent designs? It was suggested by quite a number that Faddy, the local trader, should be the sacrifice; but this proposal did not appeal to Lela, for the reason that Faddy, having a trip to Sydney in view, had promised to take the Chief with him free of all expense. Consequently, if the trader and his head parted company, all idea of a visit to the Metropolis would have to be abandoned. Lela, therefore, advocated strongly the decapitation of some other European, and at the same time dwelt in a humorous

strain upon the joke that would be played upon Faddy by first allowing him (Lela) to take advantage of the trader's kindness, and afterwards possessing themselves of the latter's head, upon his return to the island.

It is generally believed, however, that this suggestion of Lela's, though it eventually carried the day, would not have done so but for the fact that Faddy, fortunately for himself, had an impediment in his speech, which affliction, without doubt, was the means of saving his life. The superstitious native attributed it to his being possessed of a "debble." For that reason they were somewhat afraid of injuring anyone under such powerful patronage.

Faddy being, therefore, out of the question, at least for the present, it was decided that Oliver Burns, trading at the village of Nono, must furnish the necessary white man's head.

Several large canoes were accordingly despatched to that place, for the purpose of surprising and killing him. Upon arriving there, however, it was found that he was at Nasi Island, some twenty miles away. The canoes at once proceeded there, and met him in the Njai passage on his way home.

The curtain now rises upon act three of the drama. Scene: the placid waters of the Marovo lagoon, dotted with innumerable small coral isles, clothed in a wealth of tropical vegetation, and crowned with fronds of the graceful cocoa palm. Running before a light, though favourable breeze, through the narrow channel leading to the open sea, may be discerned the trader's cutter, while, in the distance, at the entrance to the passage, almost hidden by the dense growth of mangrove, are stationed the beautifully constructed canoes manned with Ara's avengers waiting to intercept their prey.

Then takes place the *dénouement*. As Lela's tribesmen were ranging alongside the little vessel, Burns



TRADER'S HOUSE, SOLOMON ISLANDS,

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THE MELANFESSIANA MISSION, VILLAGE OF KEA, BUGUTU, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

evidently began to suspect their intentions towards him, and peremptorily ordered them off, at the same time threatening to shoot if they did not at once obey. With the exception of two men and a youth manning a small canoe, all complied with his commands. This craft drew up alongside the cutter, when the occupants engaged in conversation the trader, who, at the time, was steering the boat. Lanasse, one of the crew, then jumped on board, and asked the trader for some tobacco. This request the latter refused, whereupon Lanasse, with a tomahawk handed to him by Ugatu out of the canoe, brained Burns, while the doomed man was in the act of stooping in order to light his pipe. This is the version of the tragedy as related by the only survivor of the cutter's crew. It differs, however, somewhat from that told by Ugatu in a formal statement made by him before Mr. Bennett.

Ugatu's account of the murder is as follows. I give it verbatim :

"Lela and Whangera (a brother sorcerer) instructed Lanasse—he being the most powerful man in the village—to kill Oliver Burns. This was done at Doorae in the presence of the whole tribe. Two days afterwards, Lanasse, Kama Gora, and I waited at Dorae for the trader. We heard that his vessel had arrived at Masai, and was anchored there. We proceeded, therefore, to that place, and found the rest of the tribe waiting at Mata Kuri, a short distance away. The cutter, after remaining a few hours, continued her voyage, followed by us in a canoe. When close to Mata Kuri the remainder of the tribe put off to the vessel in their canoes, ours closing up also. When near the cutter Burns warned us all off, threatening to shoot if we did not do so. The others obeyed, but we went alongside. Lanasse told the trader he wanted to go to Soy, and requested to be allowed to come on board. Upon Burns agreeing, Lanasse jumped on

deck and sat on the after rail, to which was made fast the canoe. A tomahawk was then placed by Kama Gora in the bow of our boat within reach of Lanasse. Burns was sitting down close to the cabin door, and as he stooped down to light his pipe, Lanasse secured the tomahawk and struck the trader behind the ear, killing him instantly, and causing him to drop down into the cabin. Lanasse then procured a rifle, and fired at two of the native crew, despatching one, besides wounding another. The remainder of the Malaita "boys" thereupon took to the water. All the canoes had now come up alongside, when their occupants, including Lela and Whangera, boarded the vessel—Ditchie went down into the cabin and lifted Burns on deck, where he decapitated him. Lela then took the tiller, and ran the vessel ashore at Matu River, where the whole of the tribe looted her, finishing up by burning the cutter with Burns' body on board. Ditchie carried the head to Doorae, when he passed it over to Lela, who cured it, remarking as he was doing so, 'All right—white man made Ara fast—he die—I now kill white man—he all finish now.'

"All guns found on board the cutter, together with ammunition, were taken possession of by Lela and Whangera, who sold some of them to Wae Wera and Uguru, of Paundokora."

The fate of the native crew who took to the water is unknown, excepting that of one, who managed to reach Roviana, and gave an account of the tragedy. As for Faddy, he at once made good his escape, and took the steamer to Sydney, where he has taken up his permanent residence. It is needless, of course, to state that he was not accompanied to the Metropolis by the crafty Lela. Faddy, moreover, when spoken to upon the subject of his return to the islands, replies that he does not in future propose residing in any country where the connection between his head

and the rest of his anatomy is dependent upon the supposed possession of supernatural powers, through an alliance with His Satanic Majesty.

The murder of Burns was followed by a series of raids into the Lela territory, some under Government officers, others by traders with permission from the authorities.

The usual course pursued in these raids, whether under Government supervision or otherwise, was for the attacking party, composed of officials and traders, to meet at a pre-arranged *rendezvous*, bringing with them all the Malaita "boys" they could muster. These latter would be armed with rifles, as well as tomahawks, and landed in the proximity of some unsuspecting village. With no one to keep them under control they would be given *carte blanche* to kill, raid, burn, and destroy everybody and everything that crossed their path. Now a Malaita islander, so armed and under such circumstances, becomes virtually crazed with blood lust and is thereby transformed into a fiend incarnate. Human life loses all value to him. Tomahawking comes as natural as eating a meal; and he becomes wholly imbued with a devilish mania for killing. Letting loose a band of Malaita Islanders in the manner indicated is only comparable, therefore, as regards results, to the introduction of a pack of hungry wolves into a fold of sheep.

Consequently, the effect of this course of action on the part of the Government and traders was only what might have been anticipated. In these raids, no discrimination was shown; the innocent of both sexes and of all ages suffered equally with the guilty.

As illustrative of this it will suffice to give an account of a raid supervised by Government Officials. These so-called punitive expeditions were all alike in their monotonous barbarity. The details of this particular

one were furnished to me by an eye witness, in fact by a trader who participated in it.

The raid in question is known as the second ; the first, under a District Magistrate, having been considered abortive, in so far as only one of Lela's clan had been wounded ; though several villages, presumably inhabited by innocent people, had been burned, and a number of valuable canoes destroyed.

Mr. Woodford, the present Resident Commissioner, thereupon "took a hand in the game" himself. He sent instructions to a prominent trader to be prepared, as his services would be required ; also to have in readiness as many Malaita men as were available. Eventually the Government steamer "Bellama" appeared on the scene, with Mr. Woodford and two other officials on board, when a plan of campaign was formulated and agreed upon.

The "Bellama" then proceeded to the contemplated scene of action, accompanied by several traders with their forces, consisting of Malaita "boys." Upon arriving at a village in the lagoon, the "army" was landed in two detachments, one in command of an official. He worked inland, but, upon a band of natives approaching him in an apparently hostile attitude, he retreated without sustaining, or, as far as he knew, inflicting upon the enemy, any casualties. The fact is that his men, as always happened on these raids, became uncontrollable, and scattered, going off on private slaughtering expeditions of their own ; so that it will never be known how many natives suffered at their hands. The other detachment remained on the beach, consequently the reported results of its operations may be accepted as fairly accurate.

At the first village attacked and destroyed a fusilade was poured into it, by which the casualties estimated were at least seventeen natives killed, including a woman and child. At the second, which the inhabi-



DEVIL HOUSE, ROVIANA LAGOON, NEW GEORGIA. UNDER THE CORAL IN THE FOREGROUND ARE THE SKULLS OF ENEMIES KILLED IN BATTLE.

[Facing page 112.]



AUKI VILLAGE, MALAITA.

tants had almost evacuated by the time it was reached, only three were slaughtered, one of whom was a woman. The killing of her constitutes an episode, the particulars of which are almost too brutal and horrible to relate. A high official and a trader were standing on the deck of a launch when a native was espied fleeing for dear life along the beach, with an armed Malaita "boy" in pursuit. The official promptly possessed himself of a rifle, and fired at, but missed, the fugitive. He, thereupon, handed the weapon to his companion, remarking that, as the trader was a better marksman, he should try a shot. The invitation accepted resulted in the disablement of the poor hunted creature, who fell upon the reef, thereby enabling the pursuer to overtake his prospective prey whom he promptly decapitated with a tomahawk. While the Malaita boy was returning with his reeking trophy, the official warmly congratulated his companion upon the excellence of the latter's aim. But when the head was deposited at their feet,—“tell it not in Gath, publish it not on the streets of Askelon”—lo and behold! it was that of a woman! They, of course, as might be expected, aver that the victim's sex was unknown to them when she was so ruthlessly shot down.

No comment is needed upon this barbarous incident, the particulars of which were furnished to me by the man who brought the girl down, and who excused his action on the plea that he was obliged to obey orders. It is impossible to believe that the participants in this episode were not aware when they fired at her that the fugitive was a woman. The huge bustle which all females wear throughout the group, as described in a previous chapter, distinguishes them unmistakably, at any reasonable distance, from the men. Besides, the affair took place in broad daylight. I, therefore, contend that the official, who was really responsible for the perpetration of this brutal outrage,

is at the very least deserving of the severest condemnation for criminal carelessness. Moreover, even if the victim had proved to be a man that fact would have constituted absolutely no excuse for such inhuman conduct, there being nothing to warrant an assumption that the fugitive had been in any way concerned in the murder of Oliver Burns.

It may be stated that this so-called punitive expedition (in which, out of twenty killed, three—that is to say, the two women and child—were certainly innocent of any wrongdoing), took place on a Christmas morning, the birthday of the Galilean Carpenter, the Prince of Peace, and was officered by men who claim to be His followers.

During the intervals between these raids, the natives naturally indulged in reprisals whenever opportunity offered. They burned and looted stores, instituting throughout the Marovo lagoon a reign of lawlessness which continues to the present day. Moreover, up to the date of our arrival at Grassi, the net result of all this guerilla warfare, so far as those directly implicated in the murder of Burns were concerned, was the apprehension of Lanasse, who, betrayed by a section of his own people into the hands of the authorities, is now awaiting trial in Tulagi gaol. Lela, and his brother sorcerer, Whangera, are both still at large, so were Ugatu and Kama Gora; consequently, all the slaughtering of innocent natives, of both sexes, together with the destruction and looting of their property, has been in vain, while the native faith in the white man's justice has been entirely destroyed.

In the succeeding chapter I will relate what happened at Grassi, in respect to our efforts to induce the surrender of Ugatu and Kama Gora, by means the very reverse of the sanguinary course which had been adopted by the Government, as above described, and I will



PANO AND RELATIVES, PANO IN CENTRE, ROVIANA, NEW GEORGIA.

(Facing page 114.)



ROVIANA NATIVES, CENTRAL FIGURE HELPED TO KILL AND EAT
TWO WRECKED SAILORS, SOME YEARS AGO.

[Facing page 116.]

show what success crowned Mr. Wheatley's diplomacy in the matter.

CHAPTER XII

SURRENDER OF MURDERERS OF OLIVER BURNS—TAMBO
OR DEVIL HOUSES—STONE DEVIL—CURIO HUNTING—
DANGERS INCIDENTAL TO VOYAGE TO BUGUTU—
SUSPICIOUS INCIDENT—HEAD HUNTING—ARRIVAL
AT KEA—NATIVE SUPERSTITIONS—ANCIENT
SHELL FRETWORK—BUGUTU NATIVES—LIGHT
COLOUR—UNWARLIKE—KOLAMBANGRE

THE opening of the conference between Mr. Wheatley and the Ramada natives, with the object of obtaining the surrender of Ugatu and Kama Gora, two of the men implicated in the murder of Oliver Burns, an account of which is given in the previous chapter, presented a scene of such a character as would scarcely appear inviting to a person inflicted with sensitive nerves.

Seated under the verandah of the trading station, with his back to the wall, for the sake of safety, was Norman. At his request, for a purpose which will appear later, I occupied a chair beside him, while the other three white men reclined on the floor alongside. Squatting on their haunches, in the customary native fashion, and facing us, were some fifteen fierce-looking, almost naked, black New Georgia savages. Without any doubt, most of them, until quite recently, had been cannibals as well as enthusiastic head-hunters, which festive mode of recreation had been abandoned only in compliance with the white man's prohibition, and not by reason of any change of heart. They were all fully armed, with tomahawk and shield, while the space between us and them was occupied by a long,



FISHING CANOE, SOLOMON ISLANDS.



CHIEF GORE'S CANOE, SHORTLAND ISLAND. GORE STANDING UP.

[Facing page 117.]

low table, upon which, very much in evidence, were our revolvers.

Throughout the proceedings Norman proved himself to be a diplomat of no mean order. He speaks the New Georgian dialect proficiently, and was not handicapped, therefore, by having to talk to them through an interpreter.

His address, which lasted about half an hour, was first devoted to a recital of how long he had been in the group, trading with them, and to the satisfactory treatment they had always received from him in their various business transactions. He then advanced reasons why, in his opinion, Ugatu and Kama Gora should surrender to the authorities, in order to stand their trial, not only in their own interests, but also in those of the whole community. Occasionally he would appeal to me for confirmation of his arguments. As I did not, at the time, understand a word he was saying to them, there was no other course open to me but to acquiesce, which behaviour on my part appeared to have some considerable weight with his audience, no doubt owing to a great extent to my adopting a very wise and judicial air. They were very curious to know whether I had any connection with the Government. He led them to believe such was the case—an honour which, under any other circumstances, I would certainly have disclaimed.

After listening attentively to Norman, and asking him a few questions, principally with respect to whether he would use his influence with the authorities in the interests of Ugatu and Kama Gora, provided they surrendered—to which he gave a favourable reply—the deputation intimated that they would like to discuss the matter fully amongst themselves, in the village, and promised to arrive at a decision by the morrow. Upon being informed that this was satisfactory, they, thereupon, withdrew, and paddled

off across the lagoon in their canoes, looking somewhat less hostile and sullen than upon their arrival, a fact we construed as a favourable augury for the success of our mission.

This delay enabled me, in company with Mr. Bennett, to visit some very interesting coral cliffs on the coast, about three miles from the trading station. They rise from the sea beach to a height of about sixty feet, and are honeycombed with caverns of apparently considerable extent, hollowed out, I imagine, by the action of the waves, while the land was being slowly upheaved in the ages of long ago.

Unfortunately we forgot to provide ourselves with lamps, so that a thorough exploration of their interior was out of the question. Consequently, I cannot hazard an opinion as to how far they run back into the cliffs, though, judging from their dimensions at some distance within the interior, I am inclined to believe that they are quite extensive.

An added interest is given to these caves by the fact that the Ramada people have converted them into "tambo" shrines. Every cranny, crevice, and nook is a depository for the skulls of their dead, as well as those of the enemy slain in battle or on head-hunting expeditions. The whole face of the rock is studded with these grim relics of humanity, grinning down upon the visitor, and creating, as may well be imagined, a most weird and uncanny effect.

Though we did not discover in them, as we had in other "tambo" shrines, any representations of the Devil, we found, scattered about the caves, many propitiatory offerings, consisting of shell money, ornaments, and also nearly every other article of island value. By eluding the vigilance of our native escort I was enabled to add to my curio collection a specimen of carved shell work from one of these natural and unique "tambo" houses.

Upon our return to the station, I intimated to Mr. Wheatley that I intended visiting one of the villages across the entrance to the lagoon. At first he was very much averse to this proposal, on account of the unfriendly attitude of the native population towards Europeans; but, realising that I was determined, two of his Malaita "boys" were armed, and instructed to accompany me, as a bodyguard. He insisted also upon my carrying a huge revolver, plain for all eyes to see, which made me feel as if I were again back in our "Wild and woolly West." Being thus well prepared for any eventualities, we crossed over to the vicinity of the nearest village.

Having landed, a short walk along the beach brought us to the house of the Chief, whose reception was cordial enough. Moreover, he constituted himself our escort during the whole time we were in his "bailiwick," never leaving us until we had safely re-embarked on the return journey. Mr. Wheatley was of opinion that the Chief, in thus virtually constituting himself our protector, did so with the object of preventing any molestation on the part of his people, and believed that his presence had a very salutary effect. I must confess that before we had been long ashore, the sullenness of our reception by the villagers led us to attach considerable importance to the fact that we were under his ægis.

They appeared to view with resentment what, no doubt, seemed to them the unwarranted intrusion of strangers upon their privacy. A distinct thaw in the frigidity of their manner became apparent, however, as soon as they perceived that I was prepared to exchange good tobacco and money for articles of little value to them.

But, as I wandered through the village, accompanied by a numerous retinue of practically irresponsible savages, all armed with the deadly tomahawk, exploring

their almost lightless dwellings in my quest for curios, the fact was brought vividly home how little protection my revolver afforded me other than by its moral effect. There was hardly a moment, during the afternoon that I spent in their village, in which these natives could not have brained me, had they so desired, before I could have laid a hand upon that weapon. Fortunately, however, probably on account of the Chief's influence, the spirit did not move them in that direction, and the peace was preserved.

After ransacking most of the principal houses, and securing all the articles I could find that were of any interest to me, such as the canoe-gods, spears, shields, and carved shell ornaments, I wandered up to a large "tambo" house situated on a slight eminence behind the village. The path leading to it skirted the food gardens, and I was particularly struck with the extent of these, as well as the commendable order in which they were kept. This work is performed by the women, a number of whom were busily engaged weeding, as we passed. They took little notice of us, apparently, notwithstanding that the sight of a white man must be a comparatively rare occurrence hereabouts.

While preparing my camera to take a photo of the "tambo" house, I noticed, at the foot of the elaborately, though grotesquely, carved wooden idol, or representation of the Devil, an apparently very ancient stone figure of human form but with a crocodile expression. Though past experience had led me to the conclusion that it was impossible to obtain, by purchase, any article from a "tambo" shrine, I lifted up this particular stone carving, and, merely through force of habit, asked the Chief, who was standing by, to sell it to me—not imagining for a moment that he would entertain the proposal. To my amazement he appeared to hesitate, instead of at once replying in the regular formula, "H'm b'long tambo—no can

sell." This action on his part encouraged me to offer him half a dozen shillings, which he at first refused, but ultimately accepted, with great reluctance, after being strongly importuned. In case he might be tempted to change his mind, I thereupon hurried through with my photographing, and lost no time in getting back to our boat. But I had to carry the "devil" myself. Not one of the natives to whom I had entrusted my other purchases could be prevailed upon to touch the image, for the very good reason, as I found out later, that they were firmly convinced that a violent end would be the speedy doom of whoever removed it from the "tambo" house.

In due course we safely reached the station, with all my acquisitions, including the stone image, which latter, I feel satisfied, originally occupied the chief place in the "tambo" shrine. Undoubtedly this stone image was one of a very ancient type, that, in course of time, had been deposed from its high estate, and supplanted by the more elaborate and grotesquely carved wooden figure.

In discussing the matter afterwards with Norman, he inclined to the opinion that the Chief allowed me to purchase the image for the purpose of speedily ridding himself and the village of my unwelcome presence. Moreover, no doubt he also had the satisfaction of believing that, through my becoming possessed of it, I should inevitably come to a speedy and violent end. Both buyer and seller, therefore, were well satisfied. He felt convinced that a certain doom awaited me, while I was pleased at becoming the happy possessor of a devil, all to myself, in the shape of a very valuable stone antiquity, which imagine, has the additional merit of being as real as any of the bugbears in the way of devils that are supposed to afflict the whole human race, save and excepting, of course, that portion known as the "Very

Elect!" So far, however, my friend the Chief's belief has not materialised. No dire catastrophe has yet overtaken me, through my sacrilegious act, in despoiling the "tambo" shrine of its tutelary deity. The explanation of my immunity probably is that this stone personification of the Evil Principal is quite satisfied with his new quarters, where he reigns free from the daily humiliation of rival claims impudently advanced by the common, modern, wooden apology for a deity that had almost supplanted him in the eyes of its New Georgian adherents. Perhaps my venerable stone devil even enjoys the familiar surroundings of the curio room. Be that as it may, on the principle that sufficient for the day is the evil thereof, I am not losing any appreciable amount of sleep over the matter.

Next morning, bright and early, appeared on the scene, according to promise, our visitors of the previous day; but they had not arrived at any conclusion with respect to the momentous question as to whether Ugatu and Kama Gora should be surrendered. Norman, therefore, strongly impressed upon them, that, as he was not personally concerned in their decision, it being of no importance to him, he could not delay his departure later than noon; so that, if the men were not on board by that hour, the launch would be compelled to leave without them, in which event the consequences of any action the authorities might take in the matter could not be laid at his door.

After dinner, as we were preparing to embark, the Chief again appeared with a request for further delay, on the grounds that Ugatu and Kama Gora had decided to give themselves up to the Government, if Norman would allow a number of their friends to accompany them to Gizo. This request having been acceded to, he took his departure, and, about an hour later, the much wanted men, together with some twenty other

natives, paddled up alongside the launch, and came aboard. They brought with them about fifty pounds' worth of shell money, and other valuables, including a beautifully carved, as well as elaborately ornamented, necklace. All of these they handed to Norman, with the request that he would accept them as a remuneration for his promised influence with the Government on behalf of Ugatu and Kama Gora.

I may state that Mr. Wheatley, instead of retaining these presents, as he might justly have done, handed all of them over to the authorities at Gizo, who nominally confiscated them. Shortly afterwards, with the view of purchasing the neck ornament from the Government, I instituted inquiries as to what had become of it, but could obtain no satisfaction. I am constrained, therefore, to believe that it shared the same fate as befel all the innumerable articles of great value looted from the natives in the different Government raids.

However, I had no reason to be disappointed with the results of my curio-hunting round Grassi. Besides what I procured from the natives, Mr. Bennett kindly presented me, at leaving, with some very interesting obsolete shell money; found by him in an ancient grave, when planting out cocoa-nuts; also, he gave me two New Georgian figures, true to life, male and female, about three feet high, carved out of wood by the bushmen of the interior.

Having accomplished the object of our mission, over which we were naturally jubilant, and there being nothing further to keep us, after saying farewell to the hospitable Mr. Bennett, we at once weighed anchor, and the launch, with a favourable tide, was soon out of the lagoon heading for Kea, on the island of Bugutu, our next port of call, some sixty miles to the North-East of Grassi.

Upon reaching the open sea, it was decided to disarm

the Ramada people, who, when they came aboard, might easily have been mistaken, judging from the number of weapons carried by them, for a party setting out on a head-hunting expedition. This was a very necessary precaution, in view of the fact that, as against four Europeans, there were, at the time, about thirty natives on the launch, of whom at least three-fourths, if the opportunity offered, might have been unable to resist the temptation of despatching the white men to that bourn from which there is no return. Moreover, the mind of the savage is so constituted that it is absolutely impossible for civilized men to understand its workings, so that one can never foresee what he will do under any given circumstances.

Our Grassi friends therefore were deprived, for the time being, of all their arms, consisting of tomahawks, knives, and shields, which were deposited in the after hold, close under the hatch.

In this connection a rather peculiar incident occurred about dusk, when some miles off the Bugutu coast. While standing at the break of the poop, facing the hatchway, engaged in a conversation with Norman, who was seated on a box, with his back towards it, I noticed a number of natives gradually congregating there also. One in particular, squatting near the combing, was grasping the handle of a tomahawk that protruded from the open hatch, which, in some mysterious manner, had become uncovered, and down which all their arms were stacked. Upon drawing Norman's attention to this very suspicious circumstance, he at once sprang up, drove all the Ramada people forward, and in language, which, though scarcely polite, was unique in its lurid effect, and in the originality of the epithets used, ordered the replacement of the hatch-cover. At the same time he demanded from the crew who was responsible for its removal. No one, however, appeared to know how



AUTHOR AT LOGA, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

[Facing page 124.]



TRADER AND WIFE, GRASSI, NEW GEORGIA.

[Facing page 125.]

this had happened—whether designedly, or without any ulterior motive. If the culprit had been discovered, I really believe he would have been thrown overboard by Norman, so exceedingly incensed was the trader by what had occurred. During the rest of the voyage no more trouble was experienced, in respect to their weapons. This incident proved to their owners that we were on our guard, and that any trifling on their part would be strongly resented.

Very shortly after leaving New Georgia, a strong, head wind, accompanied by frequent rain squalls, was encountered ; so that the passage over to Bugutu proved rough and tedious. The mouth of the Straits up which Kea is situated, was, in consequence not reached until late at night, necessitating anchoring there until daybreak.

Early morn saw us again under weigh, running up the narrow passage, through innumerable islands clothed with luxuriant, tropical vegetation, extending down to the water's edge and affording an ideal haunt for the numerous crocodiles that frequent this shore.

The beauty of this landscape picture could scarcely be surpassed. Peace and quietness reigned supreme, and yet how often, until very recently, have the surrounding hills re-echoed the dying shrieks of the victims of many a midnight raid by the sanguinary New Georgians. This was his happy head-hunting ground, where men, women, and children of all ages, were ruthlessly massacred, until the European placed a "tabu" on that festive diversion, thereby preserving from utter extermination the remnant of the inhabitants of Bugutu.

Kea, a station of the Melanesian or Church of England Mission, is a credit to that society. The village, situated upon the slope of a hill, is the cleanest and prettiest of any I visited in the group. The accompanying photograph will give a fair description of its

general appearance. Running down from the high-lands above, through what may be termed the main street, is a little stream furnishing a plentiful supply of purest water. On each side of this rivulet are planted crotons, gorgeous in their many-coloured foliage, hibiscus, and other tropical shrubs, while, conspicuously near the water-front, stands the church well-built, and surrounded by quite an extensive garden.

The particular feature, however, that strikes the eye of the visitor to a Bugutu village, and differentiates it from those of the other islands, is the style of architecture. The dwellings, instead of being built on the ground, as is generally the case throughout the group, stand elevated on posts about six feet high, thereby necessitating the construction of floors, which are neatly made from split bamboo, kept in place by a binding of native-made sinnett. Round all four sides of every house is a wide verandah, access to which is usually gained by means of a very flimsy ladder.

This class of dwelling is, I think, a modified survival of what the Bugutu people, until a comparatively recent date, were accustomed to build on the forked branches of the largest trees, as a protection against the constant attacks of the New Georgian marauders.

The Bugutu Islander, whom ethnologists class as Melanesian, differs from his black Papuan neighbours in that, though negroid in features and hair, in colour they approach closely to the Polynesian. In fact, several young women whom I met in Kea were of as light a shade of brown as any Tahitian or Raratongan. Nor have they that sullen appearance so characteristic of their darker neighbours. On the contrary, they are bright and cheerful in manner, not only amongst themselves, but also towards strangers, contrasting strikingly in that respect, with the natives of New



NATIVE STYLE OF KILLING A PIG, GANUTU, SOLOMONS.

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MARAU FAMILY, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

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Georgia, and with those of the adjacent island of Choisel.

Apparently they were never a warlike race, a fact which explains why they have been almost exterminated by the fierce Ramada and Roviana Vikings, the scourge of these inland seas, before head-hunting was abolished.

Notwithstanding the efforts of the missionaries, the Kea people, though nominally Christians, are very superstitious. As an instance of this, I was shewn, by the native teacher, a large, round, water-worn boulder, which, he assured me—quite conscientiously as I believe—was accustomed, through some inherent miraculous power, to move, by its own volition, from place to place inside the church, when no one was present. They retain tenaciously, also, all the old, savage beliefs regarding witchcraft, demons, elves, and fairies, though this is not very surprising, in view of the fact that they have only recently become converted to Christianity. How many are there of our own race—the product of two thousand years of civilisation—free from superstitious ideas, many of them of a most puerile character?

With the exception of a few household utensils and personal ornaments, there were very few articles of interest to be obtained at Kea. I was very fortunate, however, in securing a piece of giant clam-shell fretwork about a foot square, designed to represent small human figures in the act of dancing. When it is taken into consideration that this work must have been done with strips of bamboo, in lieu of a saw, one can realise the vast amount of labour involved. I know of only two other pieces in existence. According to the natives, these, combined, formed the ornamentation of a cave on Choisel, which, in ancient times, had evidently been used for sepulchral purposes. This particular piece had been in the possession of

the owner's family for a longer time than he could say, and was so little valued by him, that, when it was brought to me, while sitting on a verandah purchasing curios, he looked quite sheepish, apparently as if ashamed to offer for sale an article which, in his estimation, could be of little interest to anyone. Though taken by surprise, I had sufficient presence of mind to appear very little interested, and in that way secured, a treasure I had been hunting for all over the islands, while the late owner departed quite satisfied, and evidently imbued with the conviction that, in this instance, he had scored off the fool white man.

Upon leaving Kea, and regaining the open sea, we headed straight for Gizo, skirting Kolombangra by the way. This island virtually consists of what must have been in the past a huge volcano, now extinct. Around its base are large tracts of very rich, low-lying land, the chief constituents of which are volcanic matter and debris washed down from the mountain side in the course of ages of erosive action.

With the aid of glasses, it could be seen that the Kolombangra river, which has its source in the crater, flows out of the latter through a wide and apparently deep gorge. According to native reports the river is fed by a large lake that fills the whole of the crater's basin.

Mr. Cruickshanks and I had arranged to return from Gizo, with the object of following the river to where it debouched from the Canyon, and then, if found practicable, to explore it to its source. Norman kindly offered to assist us by despatching some of his "boys" ahead for the purpose, where necessary, of clearing a path.

To my great regret, however, these plans came to naught, and all idea of the expedition had to be abandoned, owing to Norman being prevented from



NATIVE CHILDREN, GUADALCANIAV, THE SOLOMONS.
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GROUP OF NATIVES, MAROVO LAGOON, NEW GEORGIA.

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assisting us on account of certain untoward events which took place upon our arrival at Gizo.

It may reasonably be enquired, why did not the authorities themselves undertake a task so important as obtaining the surrender of Burns's murderers, instead of requisitioning the services of Norman Wheatley, a private trader. In the succeeding chapter, therefore, I will give an account of the disgraceful political situation that has existed for years, and still exists, throughout the Protectorate.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SOLOMON ISLANDS—THEIR GOVERNMENT—INCAPACITY OF OFFICIALS—MAL-ADMINISTRATION— INSTANCES OF OPPRESSION—ALIENATION OF NATIVE LANDS

THE SOLOMON ISLANDS are a land of "battle, murder, and sudden death," a position of affairs due chiefly to the apathy and supineness of an incompetent Government.

They are, I am ashamed to say, a Protectorate of Great Britain. The administration consists nominally of a Resident Commissioner—who is responsible to the High Commissioner of the Western Pacific at Fiji—a collector of customs, who is also chief postmaster, a labour inspector, and three resident magistrates, two of whom, mere inexperienced youths, are deputy commissioners, by virtue of which latter appointments they are invested with almost unlimited powers, though devoid of any administrative knowledge or ability, and lamentably ignorant of law and of legal procedure.

Until very recently, however, the government, in reality, has been itself one of the trader, and it is at the present time through the agency of missionaries, as will be shewn later, at least as far as the western portion of the group is concerned.

In my travels during the last fifteen years, through a great portion of Britain's vast dominions, I have invariably found evidences of the capacity of the Anglo-Saxon to colonize successfully the wildest

portions of the earth, and also of their administrative ability in governing native races. The Britisher, in fact, is possessed of faculties akin to genius for organising systems of government, under which the community enjoy a maximum of benefit, combined with a minimum of encroachment upon the liberty of the individual. As an example I might instance the London police system, with which there is none to compare in any foreign city of importance.

But the Solomon Islands certainly prove the exception to this rule. Their administration is a disgrace to the British Empire. The ignorance betrayed by the *personnel* of the administration of all matters pertaining to good government is monumental, and is surpassed only by their colossal bump-tiousness.

It would appear that the members of the Government imagine their sole functions and duties to be confined to pursuing a policy of *laissez faire*, and of drawing their salaries to recompense themselves for the onerous labour involved thereby. Certainly they all display much aptitude for these tasks.

From the official statement I gather that the total receipts derived from customs duties for the fiscal year ending March, 1909, were for trading and labour licenses, postal, and other miscellaneous sources, the sum of £10,603, and that the expenditure was £13,257, certainly a remarkable financial feat, in view of the fact that no credit balance had been carried forward from the previous year nor was any liability shewn in the statement for the one I refer to. But then, there is practically no limit to the abilities of the Solomon Islands Government. Out of the latter sum £6,000 was appropriated to pay the balance of purchase money of the steamer "Bellama," the island "Navy," which vessel, according to the opinion of experts, was never, at any time, worth more than half that

amount. The balance of revenue, £7,257, was virtually all frittered away in the payment of Governmental expenses (such as salaries, travelling, etc.), in improving official residences, in law costs, and up-keeping the "Navy." As a matter of fact, the only benefits received by the public from the revenue were £5 3s. 9d. expended in quarantine service, and £188 5s. 2d. as postal expenditure, a munificent total of £193 8s. 11d.!

I would suggest that a good motto for the Protectorate would be the old Latin proverb, "*Festina lente.*" There is not a yard of road in the whole of the group, not an aid to navigation, nor a beacon in any harbour, with the exception of Tulagi; while those erected there are useless, for the reason that the farthest one is smaller, instead of being larger than the nearest. Moreover, there is neither a dock nor slip upon which the numerous small craft playing in these waters, and collecting copra and other produce, can be hauled up and repaired.

But of all the charges of dereliction of duty that can be brought against the administration, the most serious is the almost incredible fact that there is neither a hospital nor a Government Medical Officer in the group, cursed, though it is, with malarial and black-water fever. I have seen strong men, after a residence of less than three months on these islands, transformed into mere physical wrecks, and carried in a state of collapse, aboard the outbound steamer, a result due, to a great extent, to lack of hospital service and medical treatment. If the officials are approached on the subject they plead poverty, but they have no hesitation in squandering the Protectorate's resources in the useless manner indicated above.

There should be a hospital at each of the three Government stations—Tulagi, Gizo, and Faisi—with a medical officer in attendance at all of them. These



RUSSEL ISLANDER, THE SOLOMONS.

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AUKA VILLAGE STREET, MALAITA, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

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officers might also act respectively as resident magistrates at each of these posts, until the time arrives when the duties of the combined positions will become too onerous for them. This scheme would enable the Government to dispense with the valuable services of the two youths, who, at the present time, masquerade as Deputy Commissioners ; while their salaries would go towards defraying the medical and hospital service.

Under these circumstances it is not at all surprising that the administration of the group affords no protection to life and property, five murders, including that of a white man, having been committed during my stay in the islands. The native has neither respect for, nor fear of, the nondescript institution, by courtesy called the Government, and every white man has therefore to go armed, his life being in constant jeopardy.

If a native commits a murder, and cannot be apprehended, through the lack of power or means, or, as is usually the case, through the supineness of the authorities, *lex talionis* then becomes *lex terræ*. A raid under Government supervision or sanction is organised by irresponsible parties, when property of innocent people is looted and wantonly destroyed, while atrocities are committed rivaling many of those that took place on the Congo. Particulars of several of these latter I will give in a subsequent chapter.

The administration poses as the friend of the native, and also contends that its principle duty is to protect the latter from the machinations of the unscrupulous white traders, whom the lordly officials usually characterise as "beach combers," and treat as such, not disdaining, however, at the same time to tax them exorbitantly for the necessary funds required to defray their by no means niggardly and ever-increasing government salaries. But, of course, we must bear in mind the very onerous

and exacting nature of the duties performed by these officials.

Notwithstanding this professed attitude of the government towards the Islander, it shews quite an impartiality in confiscating the property of white men and native alike, so that, as far as the latter is concerned, I am constrained to conclude that his most urgent need is protection, for his lands and person, against the rapacity of the administration.

I will give one instance that actually came under my notice, and consequently cannot be disputed, of an attempt by this Government, (which claims, incessantly and blatantly, that above all else it is the protector of the native from the rapacity of the white man,) to dispossess the remnant of a once powerful tribe of the best portion of its lands.

I must first explain that there is in force an ordinance entitled, "The Solomon Islands Waste Land Regulations," under, and by virtue of which, the administration is authorised, under planting obligations, to dispose of all vacant lands; that is, of lands not actually occupied by natives, or for which there do not exist any known owners.

This measure, if rightly administered, would undoubtedly prove of great benefit to the group, by encouraging the cultivation of such waste lands; but, on the other hand, if used as a means to benefit friends and favourites of the Government, at the expense of the Islander, by the expropriation and transferring to the former of lands in the possession of, and occupied *bona fide* by, native clans, then it becomes an Act of oppression which would not be tolerated by any British community.

The particulars of the case I now propose to cite come under the latter category.

There travelled with me to the islands, on the "Makambo" two fellow passengers, one a close relative

of the Assistant High Commissioner (who was also on board, on his way to the group, for the purpose of trying to bring order out of the existing Governmental chaos, in which laudable, but herculean task, I am afraid he signally failed), and the other an alleged German-American tobacco planter. Both of these gentlemen proposed to secure large areas of land, with the ostensible purpose of planting out cocoa-nut and tobacco plantations.

Upon our arrival at Tulagi, the Government officials virtually placed their services, together with those of the "Bellama," at the disposal of these gentlemen, with the result that the latter were almost immediately able to locate for themselves two of the finest tracts of land, adjoining each other, on the island of Kolambangra, a few miles from the central Government station of Gizo. These lands comprise a large area, with several miles of water frontage, also embracing good harbourage facilities.

Upon meeting these gentlemen shortly afterwards, they appeared highly elated at having secured such valuable properties for a mere nominal consideration. They also informed me that applications for the lands in question had been filed with the Government, who, moreover, had accepted deposits and approved of the proposals, which practically closed the matter; confirmation by the Fijian authorities being considered a merely formal proceeding; which, of course, it would be, the transaction, presumably, having already received the approval of the Assistant High Commissioner.

Not being interested in the matter, I had almost forgotten it, when, some time afterwards, Norman had occasion to go to Kolambangra, and, at his request, I accompanied him. While skirting the island, on our way to a village up the coast, I noticed a large number of detached cocoa-nut groves, denoting native

occupation. I drew Norman's attention to them, with the remark that it should be a good locality for securing curios. "Oh, yès," he replied, and, to my extreme amazement, added, "but they (the natives) will not be there long; those are the lands the Government is granting to B. and F." He also informed me that, to his knowledge, the property had been for years, and was still, owned and occupied by natives of Kolombangra. When, therefore, we arrived at the village, I was somewhat prepared for what followed.

Upon landing, and after Norman had transacted his business with the native trader, a deputation, headed by the Chief, waited upon him, and, through an interpreter of their own, stated they were led to understand that the Government proposed to take from them their best property, upon which were planted the cocoa-nuts that practically constituted their livelihood. That as they were not powerful enough to dispute the action of the authorities, in respect to this contemplated spoilage, and as it appeared inevitable that the lands in question would pass to the white man, they preferred that Mr. Wheatley, whom they had known and traded with for years, should have them. They, therefore, proposed that he accept a deed of the property in question, containing, however, a stipulation that they should be allowed to collect the cocoa-nuts from all existing trees. The Chief also signified his willingness to obtain the signatures of the owners to such a conveyance of the property to Mr. Wheatley, so that, in this way, outsiders should be prevented from settling in their midst.

It was really a most pathetic picture—a pitiable sight—this band of natives, including tottering old men, as well as women, voluntarily and resignedly prepared to abandon, in favour of Mr. Wheatley, all claims to lands that had been handed down to them

by their forefathers, and upon which they chiefly relied for a living for themselves and families, knowing full well that in any event they were doomed to lose them at the hands of a hypocritical and unjust government.

No wonder I was filled with ire against an administration that would so flagrantly betray its trust, in order to benefit its friends, at the expense of the poor, defenceless native, before whom it so blatantly poses as the heaven-sent protector. I felt ashamed to think that so cold-blooded a case of injustice could be perpetrated in a country flying the British flag. When, through the interpreter, the question was put to me whether I considered it just that they should be treated in such an unrighteous manner by the white man, also, if I could help them in any way, I waxed indignant, and replied that I did not believe the higher Fijian authorities would ever sanction such an act of plunder, in the event of the facts of the case being laid before them, and that I would make it my business to enlighten them in that respect. With this end in view, I took the trouble to trace back, for four generations, the descent of the present occupiers of the lands in question, fifteen in number, including three women, and finally ascertained that two brothers, both chiefs, were, unquestionably, without the shadow of a doubt, the sole owners of the property, proposed to be confiscated, in order that it might be handed over to friends of the administration.

I can scarcely believe that the High Commissioner, when informed of the facts of the case, will confirm the action of the Solomon Islands executive ⁽¹⁾; especially

(1) On my return to Sydney, I at once reported the facts of this case to the High Commissioner at Fiji, and received a reply that he was appointing a Commissioner to enquire into it. I have not heard the result, so far.

as there can be no quibble about the land being not actually in the possession of these people. It is occupied, as much as any land ever is occupied by the native; that is, cocoa-nut groves are planted along the coast-line, there, for all eyes to see, while the owners reside in a village, which, for divers reasons, usually sanitary, but sometimes superstitious, is moved from place to place in the neighbourhood of the plantations.

Why the missionaries, especially Mr. Goldie, of the Methodist Station, near Kolombangra, who claims to have the interests of the native at heart, do not protest in the strongest manner against this proposed iniquitous action of the Government, is a mystery. Perhaps their inaction is explained by the fact that most of them are more or less in the land-grabbing business. I can offer no other solution of the problem.

It may be, and I hope earnestly that the indignation aroused on all sides against the Government, with respect to this proposed spoliation of the natives, and the publicity the matter is receiving, will extract from the administration an avowal that it has not, nor has ever had, any intention of perpetrating such a grievous wrong. As regards the latter however, the contrary can be indisputably proved. There is not the slightest doubt that, at the present juncture, the Government, whatever its ultimate decision may be, proposes to alienate the lands in question, in the interests of its friends, and at the expense of the Kolombangra native owners.

I have stated that the Government shews no discrimination in its mal-treatment of the white man and native. As illustrative of this, I may cite an instance which, on account of the lack of any system on the part of the Government, my services were requisitioned on behalf of the victim of an act of gross despotism and tyranny—a case in which the adminis-

tration confiscated the holding of one of the principal traders in the group, a property which he had occupied peaceably for years, and upon which he had spent hundreds of pounds sterling.

Mr. Norman Wheatley was the sufferer. The property taken from him comprised the islands of Samurai and Rapa in the Wana Wana lagoon, which he purchased years ago, in a wild state, and when practically valueless from a Roviana Chieftainess, Jema. These islands he cleared, and planted out with cocoa-nuts, at an expenditure of about one thousand pounds in cash.

Notwithstanding the fact that he had procured from Jema a deed which the Government lost, and another from her heirs to take its place, the self-constituted Court, consisting of the Assistant High, and Resident Commissioners, after a farcical investigation, lasting a couple of hours, at which Mr. Wheatley informed me he was not allowed to present his case, gave, on the trumped-up claim of a Methodist Mission *protégé*, one Ve'a, whose cause the mission championed, a decision which put in the shade that delivered in the long ago by the King after whom the Solomon Islands are called. It was to the effect that the property must revert to its original owners, and that Mr. Wheatley was a trespasser, ignoring the fact that, even if Ve'a's claim was a valid one, the principal owner had joined the ranks of the great majority, and that Mr. Wheatley had a deed from her heirs conveying their interest in the property in question.

As a matter of fact, I do not believe that either of the above Solomons had any right to adjudicate in such a matter, but both of them have become so accustomed to arrogate to themselves and to exercise such extraordinary powers, they really now believe their jurisdiction to be on a par with that of the Imperial Privy Council. Inflated with a belief in their

omnipotence, they have evidently arrived at the conclusion that they are, without the shadow of a doubt, "The Lords of High Decision."

It may naturally be enquired what impelled the Government to act so unjustly in this matter. To the trading element the reasons were obvious. The Mission wanted a restoration of its prestige with the natives. Veá was a *protégé* of the Mission, and his case, as I have stated, was championed by it. The question forced itself upon me "was this decision, as well as others not less extraordinary, particulars of which will be given later, explainable only on the hypothesis that they were just so many "sops" offered to the Mission by the Government? The purpose of course may be inferred if, as alleged, it had advised the administration that it purposed publishing the facts in connection with the numerous raids against the natives carried out under Government supervision or sanction, in which such iniquitous deeds had been perpetrated. In any case such remarkable actions on the part of the Government tend to shew that I am justified in characterising it as being now a missionary administration, at least as regards the Western portion of the group.

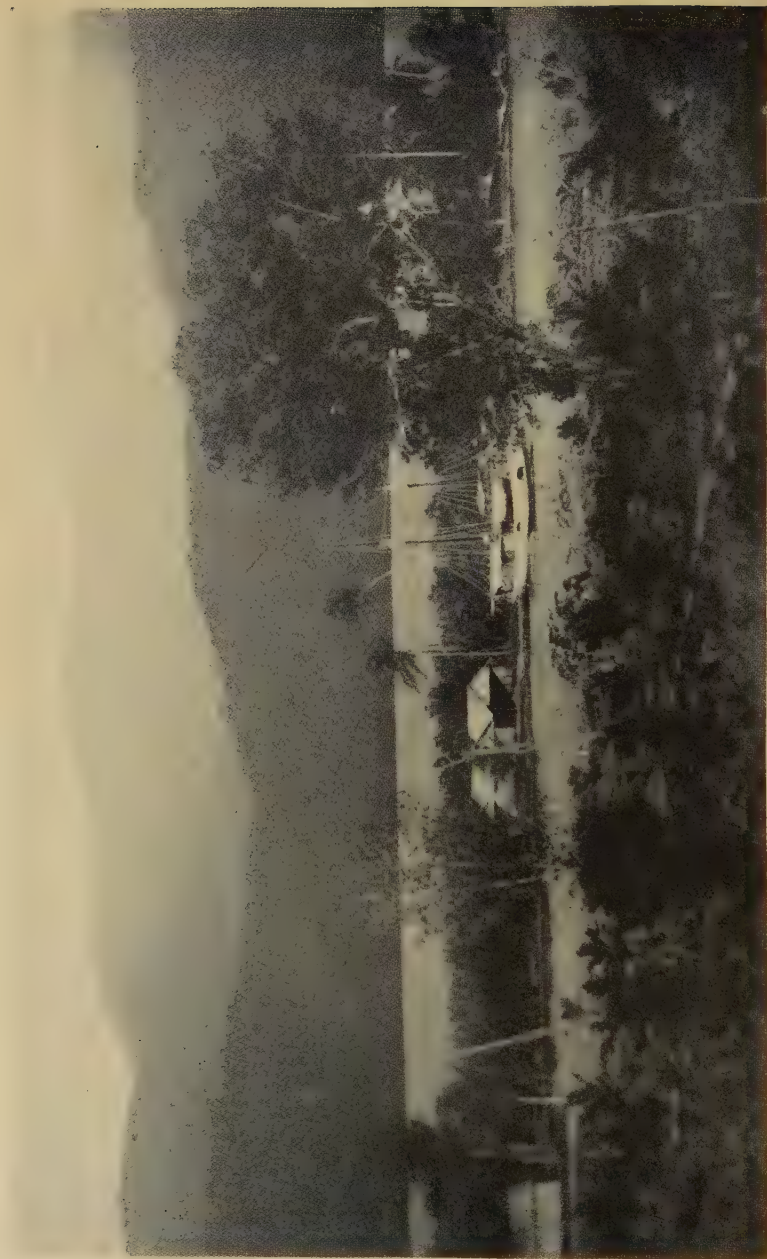
For my part, I have come to the conclusion that the only hope for the future of the islands is annexation to the Commonwealth. The trade, both as regards imports and exports, is virtually monopolised by Sydney merchants, so that it would be natural to expect that an Australian administration would govern both wisely and well, in order to attract capital, by which the wonderful resources of the group might be exploited to their utmost extent.

As for the present *régime*, it has been "weighed in the balances and found wanting." Through incapacity and supineness it has been, and is absolutely, unable to protect the lives and property of either white man or native, so that the best of reasons exists why capital



VELLA LA VELLA NATIVES, SOLOMON ISLANDS.

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ISLAND OF BAGGA, SCENE OF BINSKIN MASSACRE.

should not be invested at the present time in this group of islands, favoured though they are with a wonderfully fertile soil, and a climate unsurpassed for the raising of all tropical productions.

The Government, no doubt realising its impotence, virtually delegated its authority and prerogatives, in the past, to a "junta" of traders. This fact furnishes the explanation of the periodical raids having been generally organised by private individuals, as well as why Mr. Wheatley, a trader, was commissioned by the administration to treat with the natives of Grassi, in the Ramada lagoon, for the surrender of the murderers of Oliver Burns, in which mission he was signally successful, as related in the previous chapter.

CHAPTER XIV

ARRIVE GIZO—THE SETA AFFAIR—MURDER OF BINSKIN
FAMILY—RAIDS ON NATIVES—INDEFENSIBLE ACTS
—MISSION HOSTILITY TO GOVERNMENT

UPON arriving at Gizo, the Government steamer "Bellama" was seen to be lying at anchor. Norman, therefore, ran the launch alongside of her, and proceeded on board, where he was met by the Resident and Assistant High Commissioners.

Having reported the result of our mission to the Ramada lagoon, he naturally expected to be warmly congratulated upon the successful issue; but, instead, to his amazement, there was an appreciable frigidness in the reception accorded him. The reason for this was soon forthcoming. While standing with them on the upper deck, relating fully what had occurred at Grassi, a missionary unexpectedly came up from below. His appearance had a most astonishing effect upon the behaviour of the two officials. While extremely ludicrous, it was beneath contempt as an exhibition of pusillanimity on their part. Mr. Woodford, without a word of apology, retired precipitously into the wheel house, in a manner that certainly lacked the dignity due to his exalted position of Chief Magistrate in the Protectorate. As for the Assistant High Commissioner, he suddenly lost all interest in the trader's narrative, and, instead, became deeply absorbed in matters aquatic over the far side of the vessel. Norman was consequently left standing alone, struck dumb by their extraordinary actions, his face a picture of absolute bewilderment.

From the deck of the launch I witnessed this remarkable and certainly laughable scene, one that, if my camera had been at hand, would have afforded a fine subject for a snapshot.

Norman, after gazing for a while into vacancy, apparently at a loss how to act, turned round, and was confronted by the missionary, when he at once realised that the latter's unlooked-for appearance on deck had been the cause of Messrs. Woodford's and Mahaffy's peculiar conduct. It was quite evident that they feared being seen by the missionary holding conference with one of whose paramount influence with the native the former was intensely jealous, and, it is stated, had vowed to destroy.

But what reasons induced the authorities to humiliate their late ally and particular friend? The explanation is not far to seek.

It will be remembered, as related in a previous chapter, that the author was informed that the Mission had communicated with the Government regarding the loss of prestige sustained by it through the Seta raid, which the missionaries also apparently imagined resulted in a relative gain in "Kudos" to those traders who had been engaged therein. Moreover, it was alleged at the same time that the Mission intimated to the authorities its intention of publishing full particulars of the atrocities perpetrated by the participants in that and other previous, so-called punitive expeditions under Government supervision. Now for some reason, best known to the Missionaries, but easily surmised, such publication had so far been deferred. Taking this into consideration, together with the fact that one of them was now living, for the time being, on board the "Bellama," on the most friendly terms with the officials, I can only conclude that the above, and other incidents, which took place shortly afterwards, were just so many "sops"

thrown to the Mission by the Government. No better means could be employed by the authorities for placating the Mission and restoring their alleged lost prestige, than by impressing the native with the idea that its rival, Mr. Wheatley, was discredited in the eyes of the Government, more especially if it were made to appear that this had come to pass through missionary influence.

The fact is that the administration's "chickens were coming home to roost," and, in consequence, the authorities had been forced into adopting the fatal expedient of "following the line of least resistance." This meant that the missionaries were now reaping the fruits of their policy of postponement, in respect to the promised revelations of the iniquitous methods employed by the administration in the Seta and other raids. During the remaining days I spent in the group, the officials, without the shadow of a doubt, were "like so much clay in the potter's hands" as regards their relations with the missionaries. In other words, the latter "played the music, and the authorities danced to it."

As soon as Norman regained his senses, and without having further intercourse with the officials, he returned to the launch, which was then cast adrift and anchored some distance away. Shortly afterwards a boat came from the "Bellama," with instruction to deliver to the officer in charge Ugatu and Kama Gora, which was accordingly done. Norman also received a letter from the Resident Commissioner stating that the "Bellama" was about to proceed to Bagga, the scene of the Binskin murders, where an investigation would be held into the circumstances that, it was alleged, led to the death in gaol of two of the captured murderers. He was therefore requested to find Binskin, and to follow later, in order that both of them might be present at the enquiry.



TYPICAL NATIVE HOUSE, ROVIANA LAGOON, NEW GEORGIA.

[Facing page 144.]



CHIEF'S FAMILY, ROVIANA LAGOON, NEW GEORGIA.
WIFE AND CHILDREN AND WIFE'S MOTHER.

[Facing page 145.]

Before detailing what took place at Bagga, I will give, by way of a digression, a short account of the Binskin massacre and the Seta raids, as well as the incidents that led up to, and were the cause of, all the trouble.

As usual, the provocation arose through a breach of faith on the part of the European in his dealings with the native. Seta, an influential chief of the island of Vella Lavella, some few years ago, arranged with a certain trader, whom I will designate as B., for the purchase of a rifle, agreeing to pay for the same by delivering a certain quantity of copra.

Seta, in due course, performed his part of the contract. By that time, however, the trader had been informed that the Government authorities suspected him strongly of being the medium through which so many of the natives in his district had lately become possessed of firearms; and that, consequently, he was being closely watched. This alarmed him to such an extent that he was afraid to hand over the promised rifle to Seta, but suggested, instead, that the Chief should accept trade goods, in payment of the copra which the latter had delivered. This proposition Seta indignantly refused to entertain. On the contrary, he insisted upon the terms of the original compact being carried out. So the matter remained for some time, until, a few months later, the trader was deported from the group for alleged "gun running."

Seta, henceforth, on account of the unjust treatment meted out to him by the trader, became a man with a grievance against Europeans in general. By a process of reasoning peculiar to the native mind, he eventually arrived at the conclusion that nothing short of a white man's head could compensate him for the loss of his copra. In pursuance of this decision, Norman Wheatley was elected to pay the penalty, his head, for several reasons, being considered the easiest to secure.

But, unfortunately for the success of Seta's project, there happened to be, at the time, in that neighbourhood, another individual with the same benevolent object in view, in the person of a powerful slave, who was also the principal fighting man of Ingova, the then King, or Head Chief, of New Georgia, over whom the slave had great influence. Norman had incurred the undying enmity of this fighting man, through having supplanted him in the affections of a Roviana damsel, whom the trader subsequently made his wife. When, therefore, Seta's sinister designs came to the knowledge of Ingova, under the guise of pretended friendship for Norman, he cautioned him to be on his guard when in company with that wily chief. In reality, however, the warning was given for the purpose of enabling his fighting man to come in ahead of Seta in the race for that much-coveted trophy—the trader's head.

Of course, it is almost needless to state that Norman was quite ignorant of the duplicity on Ingova's part. For a long time afterwards he believed that Chief to be his good friend, to whom he was under a heavy obligation for the supposed warning against Seta, nor was it until very recently that he discovered Ingova's real motive.

Neither Seta or the fighting man, however, were fated to succeed in their nefarious designs. Norman's head and shoulders have not yet parted company, nor, I am happy to say, is it probable that they will do so in the near future. The fighting man, I suspect, came to an untimely end. One night the trader, while asleep down below in his schooner, was awakened by the sound as of some one creeping stealthily along the deck towards the stern of the vessel. He at once secured his revolver, and awaited the intruder's arrival upon the scene. As soon as the latter's form was framed in the cabin door, Norman struck a light,

revealing the slave man armed with a huge knife and tomahawk. From what I could gather his reception was such that "subsequent proceedings interested him no more." Any way, he has not since been seen around his old haunts, and his address is now unknown.

While these events were in progress, B.'s brother, who, unfortunately for himself, was destined to become an actor in this island drama, arrived at Vella Lavella to take the former's place in the trading business.

His recent advent in the islands, and his consequent presumed ignorance of its laws induced Seta once more to request a settlement from the firm, upon the basis of the original conditions of his contract. Trade goods, equal in value to his copra, were again offered him, and again emphatically refused. It was then distinctly impressed upon him that, under no consideration, need he expect to receive a rifle, for the very good reason that it was strictly "taboo" to furnish natives with firearms, and that he would do well, therefore, to accept the trade goods.

The wily Chief, while appearing to accept the inevitable, made up his mind to secure the head of B.'s brother, in lieu of the rifle, and to abandon altogether his designs upon Norman, especially in view of the considerable competition for that particular trophy. The new plan had the additional merit of being easier and safer, for B.'s brother was quite unconscious of any designs on Seta's part against himself. Moreover, all heads were alike to him, so long as the one secured was that of a white man, his tastes, in that respect, being not at all critical. Besides the "tambo" devil would appreciate one just as much as the other.

With this object in view, he never allowed an opportunity to pass of ingratiating himself with the trader. Nothing he could do to further this end was left undone, with the inevitable result that he gained

B.'s complete confidence. When, therefore, one fine morning, the Chief paid a visit to the trader on the latter's schooner for the purpose of purchasing a tomahawk and handle, he was escorted down to the trade room, and, after a yarn, the desired articles were handed to him, not separately, but with the handle fitted into the axe, so much faith had B. in the Chief's trustworthiness. Now this was a direct violation of a strict rule adopted by all traders, in their dealings with the natives, to the effect that, on no consideration, should a tomahawk *complete* be sold to an islander on board a trading vessel.

Dearly did B. pay for his implicit confidence in the Chief's professed friendship. No sooner had the latter possession of the weapon, than a murderous attack was made upon the trader, who, however, though caught unawares, was quick enough to ward the stroke away from his head, at the expense of an arm, which the blow almost amputated. B. at once grappled with Seta, and, being a very powerful man, though weakened through loss of blood, gradually forced him to where his revolver was hanging. The Chief, thereupon, realising that the game was up, directed his whole energy to breaking away from the trader, in which he succeeded, and escaped upon deck, when, it is needless to say, he lost no time in betaking himself overboard. B. fired several shots at him while he was swimming ashore, only one of which took effect, inflicting, however, merely a slight wound that did not incapacitate the fugitive for any great length of time.

The trader recovered temporarily, but eventually succumbed, about a year afterwards, to the effects of the injuries received. As for Seta, he retired into private life—that is to say, he took up his abode, until the excitement had subsided, in a distant bush village, from which he emerged only when it became evident



PAPUANS, NEAR SAMURAI,
BRITISH PAPUA.

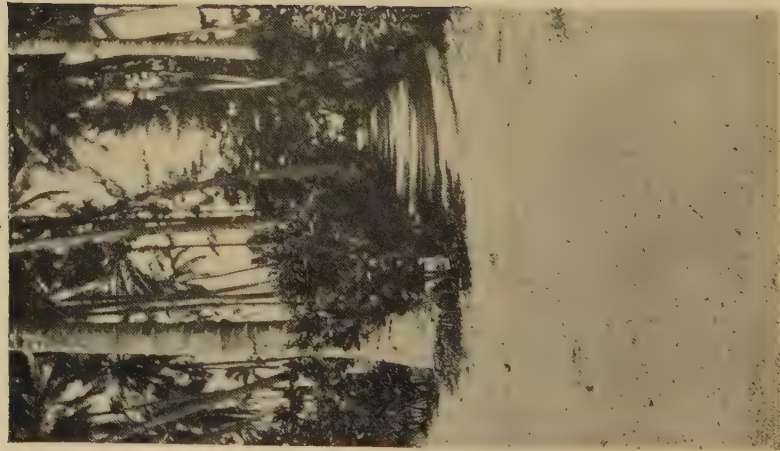


MILNE BAY NATIVES,
BRITISH PAPUA.



NATIVE POLICE, SAMURAI,
BRITISH PAPUA.

[Facing page 148.]



CROTON WALK, SAMURAI,



MAN SPEARING FISH, BRITISH



RUBBER TREES, CLUNN'S PLANTATION,

that the authorities, with their usual supineness, did not purpose taking any action towards bringing him to justice.

This was the *status quo* until January, 1909, when Mr. Partington, who had only quite recently been appointed Resident Magistrate over Gizo district, learned that Seta was living with his family in a village near the coast. Judging this a good opportunity to make a name for himself, he determined, by means foul or fair, to capture the elusive Chief, dead or alive. An armed force of Malaita "boys" was landed at a point near where Seta was supposed to be in residence. These men he despatched inland with *carte blanche* instructions, to do as they pleased, so long as they either compelled the Chief to surrender, or terminated his earthly career. Having arrived at the village, they surrounded the house which he was supposed to be occupying, and, without any useless formality, such as a demand for his surrender, they proceeded to dispatch him to that abode from which there is no return, by the simple but efficacious method of firing a volley through the matting sides of the native hut. The Chief must have been wearing a very powerful charm, for not a bullet struck him, and eventually he made his escape, unharmed, into the bush. Different, however, was the fate of his wife, who, with her two children, was asleep in the house. When they awoke, it was in the crater of the Narovo volcano, on Simbo, where, upon shuffling off this mortal coil, go all good people of Vella Lavella.

When the result was reported to him the District Magistrate must, indeed, have felt very proud of his first military campaign. Seta was yet at large, but his innocent wife and children were still in death.

This incident made the Chief an outlaw, so far as the white race was concerned. He appeared over in Gizo, and kept the Government Residency in a state

of siege, thereby revealing to the astonished natives the weakness and incompetency of the authorities. Moreover, he vowed that a European's family should suffer a like fate to that which had overtaken his; and he laid his plans accordingly for the accomplishment of this design.

The family of Jos. Binskin were elected to be the victims—not that he had any grievance against those individuals or their father in particular, but merely because the little island of Bagga, upon which the trader lived, was easily accessible from Vella Lavella. In pursuance of this decision, the Chief, last September, landed a detachment of tribesmen upon a small, densely wooded attol close to Bagga. They were under the leadership of two noted fighting men, Tongarvo and Pakobatu, who were instructed to make a descent upon Bagga's unsuspecting inhabitants as soon as the trader left on a cruise to Juroo and Aolo, which it was known he had in view. They had only to wait a couple of days before Binskin's schooner was seen making for the open sea. In a few hours it was far away upon the horizon. The tribesmen, thereupon, lost no time in launching their two canoes, and crossing over to the beautiful isle, whose serene stillness was soon to be broken by the dying screams of the innocent victims of Seta's vengeance. Upon landing, Tongarvo and Pakobatu proceeded to the house, accompanied by several of the followers, leaving one Pekumbessa in charge of the remainder, with instructions to dispatch a Malaita man and wife who attended to the store during Binskin's absence.

Tongarvo, when he reached the house, engaged the trader's wife in conversation, pretending that they had copra to sell. While bargaining with him, she was startled by the yells and screams of the Malaita "boy" and his wife, who were being butchered by Pekumbessa and his following. Warned thereby of

her danger, Mrs. Binskin fled towards the water, followed by Tongarvo, leaving, in her fright, the two children playing with each other on the verandah. She was distancing her pursuer, and would have undoubtedly escaped, when she returned for the eldest child, a girl of five years old, who, becoming alarmed, ran screaming to her mother. This maternal self-sacrifice, unfortunately, was of no avail. It merely enabled the scoundrel Tongarvo to overtake and tomahawk her on the spot. He then returned to the house, and killed the youngest girl, a child eighteen months old, while Pakobatu distinguished himself by hunting out and dispatching the eldest girl, who, after witnessing the massacre of her mother, had hidden terror stricken in the scrub. Besides the above, there were also butchered a Malaita cook boy, as well as the child of the storekeeper. The only survivor was the cook's assistant, a Choisel island youth, who managed to reach the lagoon over which he swam to where the Malaita labourers were at work. With all possible speed they hastened to Bagga, only to find the murderers gone, and their fellow islanders lying still in death.

This massacre naturally created a tremendous sensation throughout the group. Traders from all directions waited upon District Magistrate Bournese, with the object of inducing him to take active measures for the arrest of Seta and his gang of murderers. He, however, refused to move in the matter without instructions from headquarters, which could not be obtained on account of Mr. Woodford's absence in England. The traders therefore were, for the sake of the safety of the European community, compelled to act on their own initiative, it being quite apparent that any dilatoriness in dispatching a punitive expedition to Vella Lavella would be attributed by the natives to fear on the white man's part; thereby encouraging them to further deeds of violence.

With as little delay as possible, a force of traders and Malaita "boys" under the leadership of Norman Wheatley, accordingly landed near Seta's village. At the last moment they were joined by Mr. Bournese, with his Government Native Police, when the command was handed over to him.

By reason of divided counsels the results of this raid were practically "nil." Bournese, under the guidance of a native, furnished by the local missionary, proceeded inland with his police. He was deliberately misled by the guide, and accomplished nothing. The other detachments, after scouring the immediate country, without meeting any natives, returned to the beach. It was then decided to join forces, and attack Seta's stronghold. The District Magistrate, however, for reasons known only to himself, would not agree to co-operate in this programme, and refused either to accompany the expedition himself, or allow the police to join in it. He, therefore, was left behind by the traders, who, upon reaching the Chief's village, found it deserted, the inhabitants having taken to the hills. After most of the largest houses had been destroyed, a retreat was ordered. Upon the return journey, a few Malaita "boys," who had gone off on a little private head-hunting expedition, "bagged" one of Seta's people, whom, in accordance with their custom, they promptly decapitated.

It should be mentioned, also, that, during Bournese's abortive overland raid, a large "tambo" shrine was discovered by him on territory clearly outside of Seta's jurisdiction. He reported this to one of the traders who, before leaving, *accompanied by Government officials and policemen*, paid a visit to the village where the shrine was situated. After wantonly destroying it, and looting the ornamental offerings, the marauders robbed the ancestral graves of their skulls. How such an outrage, on a peaceful people, who had in no way

been implicated in Seta's misdoings, can be defended by the officials concerned in it, is a mystery to me.

The first Seta raid, as it is called, was therefore a *fiasco*, and barren of any salutary results. Moreover, as no satisfaction could be obtained from officialdom by the traders, they decided to attempt nothing further against the Chief, until Mr. Woodford's return to the group, which was expected at an early date.

The second, and most important, Seta raid took place about two months later. It was organised by the Resident Commissioner upon his arrival from England. He realised that something must be done by the authorities, in the interests of law and order; otherwise even the little semblance of Government authority that remained would be completely obliterated. As in the past, he turned to Norman Wheatley for advice and counsel. It was arranged between them that the base of operations should be Bagga, also that Wheatley and Binskin should gather together at that place as many Malaita "boys" as possible, to co-operate with the Government forces. In due course, the "Bellama" appeared at the *rendezvous* agreed upon, with Mr. Woodford and other officials on board, in command of quite a small army of natives, composed of volunteers, police, and prisoners. They were met by Wheatley and Binskin, who, besides having gathered together over one hundred Malaita "boys," has enlisted the services of two Vella Lavella clans, who, at the time, happened to be at enmity with Seta's tribe, and, in consequence, were only too pleased to embrace the opportunity of having a little head-hunting sport at the latter's expense.

In order to accomplish anything with such a heterogeneous force, a strong man in command was an indispensable factor; but such did not exist among the Government officials. In consequence of this, the inevitable result followed. Everyone did what he

considered right in his own eyes ; so that absolutely no cohesion or harmonious co-operation existed in the relations of the different detachments towards each other.

Moreover, though the Government's intention to dispatch a punitive expedition into Seta's territory had been kept a profound secret, the authorities, to enable Missionary Nicholson to gather into the mission fold all his converts and sympathisers, had advised him of their plans. These people, upon seeing the preparations that were being made, at once suspected their purport, and, without delay, advised Seta and his people of their danger.

The first two days were spent in desultory expeditions towards the interior. These were absolutely fruitless of any results, principally on account of an entire lack of system in the operations, but also through the Government forces being handicapped by Seta's missionary friends, who furnished him with full information regarding his enemies' plans.

Moreover, it was found impossible, by those in command of the different detachments, to prevent the Malaita levies from straying into the bush on expeditions of their own. The Resident Commissioner thereupon, in response to strong pressure brought to bear upon him by the trading element, weakly agreed to their proposition that the Malaita men be "let loose." He made an attempt to save his face by stipulating that, on no consideration, should women be molested. This was about equivalent to a stipulation that before a pack of wolves were introduced into a fold the slaughter of certain sheep must be forbidden them.

The result of this policy, though certainly fruitful, proved most disastrous so far as justice was concerned. Innocent and guilty suffered alike. The Malaita "boy," when filled with blood lust, is no respecter of persons. Consequently, as soon as these implacable

savages were allowed a free hand, they slaughtered indiscriminately every one that crossed their path. Friend or foe, men, women or children, all suffered the same fate. It will never be known how many were despatched by them. The official returns acknowledge the death of twenty-three men, four women, and two children ; but these figures, mere estimates, are by all accounts, considerably below the mark. I was in fact told by a man who took a very prominent part in this massacre, that, while he was at Bagga, fifty heads at least were brought in by the Malaita men. A few days later these savages also accounted for several more victims, upon whose bodies they were strongly suspected of having indulged in cannibalism. My informant, at the same time jocularly remarked that they "edited" the gruesome trophies as they were delivered. Those known to be of Seta's clan, twenty in all, were placed on one side, while the others, admittedly guiltless of any wrong-doing, were consigned to the waters of the lagoon for the sharks to dispose of ; thus destroying incriminating evidence of what really amounted to the murder of innocent natives. I am satisfied that, but for the warning received by Seta from his native missionary sympathisers, the whole clan, including women and children, would have been wiped off the face of the earth.

Seta and Tongarvo were captured, after a desperate struggle, some few days later.

Pakobatu and Pekumbessa took refuge upon Mission property, with native missionary sympathisers. This sanctuary, however, was not respected by the Malaita men, who took the fugitives away by force. It is alleged that both of these men succumbed shortly afterwards, in gaol, from the effects of injuries received at the hands of their captors, while they were in Binskin's custody, prior to their removal by him to Gizo.

This incident gave great umbrage to Missionary Nicholson, who claimed that the Malaita "boys" when affecting the capture of Pakobatu and Pekumbessa, destroyed a considerable quantity of Mission property.

All the particulars in connection with the raid were therefore at once reported by him to his superiors, and it was upon those relating to the arrest of Pakobatu and Pekumbessa that the contention was advanced regarding the alleged loss of prestige sustained by the Mission. On this account the Mission became bitterly hostile to the authorities for tacitly approving of the Malaita men's actions.

Taking all these circumstances into consideration, I suspect that it was very shortly after this stage that the authorities thought it expedient to placate the missionaries, whose wrath had to be appeased, at any cost, in order that they might be induced to refrain from publishing to the world the nauseous particulars of the misdeeds committed in the Seta, and other raids, organised and carried out under their supervision.

Presumably with this object in view they, therefore, acceded to a demand for an investigation into the missionaries' frivolous complaint against Binskin and his Malaita "boys," on account of the ill-treatment alleged to have been received by Pakobatu and Pekumbessa, at the hands of the former, while in their custody, from the effects of which it was contended, as already stated, that the prisoners eventually succumbed, shortly after their incarceration at Gizo.

The enquiry was of a most farcical nature from beginning to end, so much so, in fact, that it simply tended to confirm my suspicions that the holding of this investigation was purely and simply for the purpose of restoring to the Mission a prestige which, though never possessed of in reality, would be enhanced



PAPUAN WOMAN IN
DESHABILLE.



TANA MAN, NEW HEBRIDES.

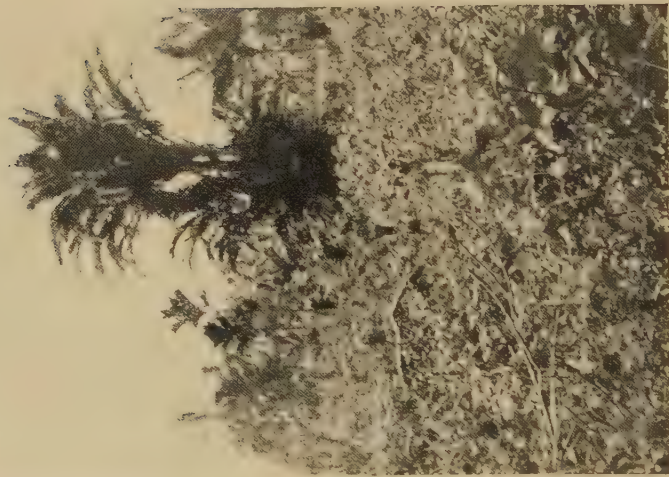


THE AUTHOR'S GUIDE, MILNE
BAY, BRITISH PAPUA.

[Facing page 156.]



SCENE IN SAMURAI, BRITISH PAPUA.



IVY NUT PALM, CLUNN'S PLANTATION,
MILNE BAY, BRITISH PAPUA.



CLUNN'S COCOANUT PLANTATION,
MILNE BAY, BRITISH PAPUA.

in the eyes of the unsophisticated natives if it were made to appear that such investigation was held at the bequest of the Missionaries.

I will now proceed to describe, in the succeeding chapter, this investigation, which took place at Bagga, into the circumstances that, as was alleged, caused the death of Pakobatu and Pekumbessa, two of the leaders in the Binskin massacre.

CHAPTER XV

BAGGA—INVESTIGATION RE ALLEGED KILLING OF
NATIVES — FARCE — RIDICULOUS VERDICT — WANA
WANA LAGOON—MURDER OF ALLEGED SORCERER
—THE MALAITA ISLANDERS—CASTAWAY'S
EXPERIENCES—VISIT KOLAMBANGRA—ANCIENT
STONE AXES—RETURN TO GIZO—FEVER—
THE SHORTLAND ISLANDS—FAISI—NATIVE
VILLAGE—WOODLARK ISLAND—THE MINES

BAGGA, one of several small attols lying off the coast of Vella Lavella, and the scene of the Binskin massacre, is, perhaps, the most charming spot I visited while in the Solomon Island group.

The graceful cocoa-nut palms with which it is covered down to the dazzling, coral strand, hide from view a picturesque bungalow, built on a little knoll rising from the centre of the island. Crotons of every hue intermingled with scarlet hibiscus, line the path leading to this pretty abode. Upon the pelucid waters of the almost land-locked lagoon, dotted here and there with native canoes, lies quietly at anchor a graceful schooner screened, by the waving palms and dense tropical vegetation, from the inquisitive gaze of those on board any passing steamer or sailing craft.

Bagga certainly would have made an ideal resort and haven of safety for the daring buccaneer, in those good old days when the outlying isles of the Pacific were the happy hunting grounds of these desperate rovers of the seas. No difficulty would have been experienced in concealing his rakish craft from the

ever prying eyes of the dreaded man-of-war's man, while, safe in the seclusion afforded by the densely wooded shore, he could hold his revels, and enjoy the fruits of his ill-gotten gains.

The accompanying photograph will give a good idea of the beauty of the scene I have attempted to portray. Mr. Binskin has christened the atoll "Paradise Isle." I suggested that "Pirate Island" would have been more appropriate, but this he would not listen to. I suspect that he lacks somewhat the romantic temperament.

Upon reaching Bagga, the "Bellama," with Messrs. Woodford, Mahaffy, and a Missionary on board, was found awaiting our arrival; there was also an interpreter, accompanied by a number of native witnesses, whom she had picked up at the Billowa Mission Station on her way down.

Before the enquiry commenced Mr. Wheatley informed me that the Assistant Commissioner had intimated to him that it was advisable that the proceedings at the investigation should receive as little publicity as possible; consequently he suggested that I should be encouraged to go "curio" hunting amongst the adjacent villages. Not being particularly interested in the matter, if I had been allowed to follow my own inclinations, without suggestions from any one, the chances are that I would have spent my time as Mr. Mahaffy desired. But this attempt, on his part, to get rid of my apparently unwelcome presence decided me to forego indulging in my favourite hobby, for the time being, and, instead, to attend the sittings of the Court. In view of what transpired, I was afterwards pleased that I had not allowed myself to be enticed away.

No time was lost in commencing the investigation. The Court consisted of Messrs. Woodford and Mahaffy, and the proceedings were certainly of an unique

character. I have attended, in various lands, a good many court sittings, some of which were quite remarkable, but this one, as we say out West, "took the cake." It was nothing more or less than a farce from beginning to end.

In the first place, the Commissioners were either unable to, or would not, define in what capacity they were acting—whether as Coroners, or as Magistrates, sitting upon an indictable case. Then no evidence was adduced even to prove that Pakobatu and Pekumbessa were dead. Insistence upon this point, might, perhaps, in ordinary circumstances, be looked upon as a superfluous precaution ; but not so in the Solomon Islands, in view of the numerous circumstantial stories rife regarding the mysterious faculty, developed, on different occasions in the past, by certain undesirable prisoners, through virtue of which they were enabled to spirit themselves out of gaol in defiance of all locks and bolts. Again, presuming that the men in question really died in Gizo gaol, no attempt was made to prove the cause of death, no medical testimony on these points being submitted.

The first witness examined was the District Magistrate, who acknowledged having received from Binskin the two prisoners in "good order and condition." Also that he placed them together in one cell, and, upon the morning of the third day afterwards, it was reported to him that Pakobatu had died the previous night, and that Pekumbessa was on the verge of death. Apparently he did not go to the trouble of verifying the truth of this report, nor could he hazard any opinion as to the cause of the alleged decease of the prisoners. This latter statement of his appears more than passing strange, considering that it was a matter of common report that the two men met their death in accordance with a mutual agreement to kill each other—an arrangement quite infrequent amongst



PAPUAN WOMEN, SAMURAI, BRITISH PAPUA.



WOODLAND WOMAN AND CHILD.

[Facing page 100.]



NEW BRITAIN NATIVE.



TYPICAL NATIVE OF PORT MORESBY,
ALL PHOTOGRAPHED BY J. H. HARRIS

Solomon Islanders, when confined in gaol on a capital charge.

Binskin then testified that he had Pakobatu and Pekumbessa in charge for twenty-four hours. Some time in the middle of the night he heard them calling for water. This request received no attention from him, at which I am not surprised, in view of the fact that, a short time previously, one of the men from whom it came had butchered, in cold blood, his wife and youngest child, as related in the previous chapter.

Several Vella Lavella natives were then examined as to what took place during the night when Pakobatu and Pekumbessa were in Binskin's custody. The interpreting was done by the mission "boy" brought for that purpose from Billowa. On the way down he was overheard coaching these witnesses with respect to the evidence they were expected to give. Moreover, this creditable mission *protégé* was locally known as "The Liar." Comment on this is unnecessary, except to point out that a man must indeed be a monumental Ananias to deserve such a designation amongst a native community, whose ideas on the subject of truthfulness are so lax and tolerant that all its members are liars, in a more or less degree.

Binskin, therefore, naturally objected to the employment of such a character in the capacity of interpreter, but his protest was over-ruled by the Court, no doubt for reasons that will become quite apparent later. This action of the Commissioners was the more indefensible in view of the fact that there happened to be present at the time the son of a trader—a very trustworthy half-caste—who could speak both languages fluently, and who, moreover, signified his willingness to act as interpreter.

During the examination of these natives there was shown the most scandalous exhibition of unfairness

I have ever witnessed in a Court of Justice. One of the members of the Court would propound glaringly leading questions, with the quite apparent object of proving, if he was answered in the affirmative, that the treatment received by Pakobatu and Pekumbessa from Binskin's Malaita "boys" while in their charge, eventually caused the death of the prisoners. These questions were put perfunctorily to the witness by this jewel of an interpreter, who, in several instances, before the man could grasp the meaning of the query, let alone reply to it, would barefacedly turn to the Court, and give, as was apparent to everyone present, the answer it desired.

One instance will suffice to show the injustice of these proceedings. A member of the Court put this question to a witness: "Did you not see Binskin's Malaita boys beating Pakobatu and Pekumbessa with clubs?" I watched the man's face closely while this proposition was being put to him. He displayed a distinct reluctance to reply, which is not to be wondered at when it had been shown that the alleged ill-treatment had taken place at night in the interior of a dark copra house. The witness was thereupon harangued by the interpreter, without any effect, when the latter then coolly turned round to the Court and, to my amazement, informed it that the man had replied in the affirmative.

This travesty of justice was continued until late at night, when the Court adjourned, on the understanding that the sittings would be resumed in the morning. The astonishment of all concerned can better be imagined than described when, bright and early next day, in fact, shortly after sunrise, the Commissioners arrived ashore and announced that no more evidence would be taken. They had heard sufficient to enable them to arrive at a decision! Then, without any further delay, an elaborate and carefully prepared document

was read, to the effect that they found two of Binskin's Malaita "boys" guilty of murdering Pakobatu and Pekumbessa, also that Binskin was an accessory before the fact. The latter's "boys" were thereupon marshalled in the open, and the farce was gone through of having the guilty ones identified by a couple of the native witnesses.

To sum up, this ridiculous verdict was arrived at solely on Binskin's acknowledgment that he had heard the prisoners calling for water, together with the evidence of a few natives, who, as was quite apparent to the onlooker, were falsely reported, through an untruthful interpreter, to have stated that they saw the two men in question being beaten in a copra house by Binskin's Malaita "boys" in the dead of night, when everything was shrouded in darkness. These alleged statements were so obviously improbable that no impartial person present placed the slightest weight upon them.

I must confess I was compelled to ask myself the question "Had this verdict been agreed upon before the opening of the enquiry?"

Consequently, as I have before stated, I strongly suspect that the whole farce was gone through for the sole purpose of placating the Missionaries by restoring and enhancing in the eyes of the natives a prestige which they were alleged to have lost through the Government's actions in the Seta raid.

This suspicion of mine is strengthened by the fact that, after the Court adjourned, one of its members, when arranging with Binskin to accept his personal bond for the future appearance of himself and the two Malaita "boys," informed him that he did not think any further action would be taken in the matter by the higher Fijian authorities. Binskin, therefore, was advised by this official to take a trip to Sydney for the sake of his health, which had been somewhat

affected by the recent murder of his wife and family.⁽¹⁾

Throughout the whole of this unique enquiry, the missionary who was present sat with a countenance inscrutable and Sphinx-like. Only once did he allow himself to betray any interest in the remarkable proceedings. When the verdict was rendered, a sardonically triumphant expression illuminated his face, showing conclusively how elated he felt at the decisive victory achieved by the Mission over the trading element. Verily there are other organisations in the religious world, besides that of the Jesuits, who consider that "the means are justified by the end."

After a couple of days spent pleasantly at Bagga in fishing and curio-hunting, we returned by way of Gizo, to Lambetta, which I again made my headquarters during the remainder of my stay in the group.

Shortly after our return there word came to Wheatley that one of his "boys" had completely disappeared from Rapa, where he was engaged in planting out cocoa-nuts. That island, and the adjacent one, Samurai, were, at the time, being cleared by the trader, with the help of a gang of Malaita men, who, some two months previously, had received, in that manner peculiar to natives, a message from far-distant Malaita instructing them to kill one of their own number, for the reason that he was credited with being a kind of amateur sorcerer, and therefore a dangerous character. On this news coming to Norman's ears, feeling convinced that the mandate would not be disregarded by these festive barbarians, who, on the contrary, would only be too delighted at an opportunity of a

(1) I have been informed lately that the Fijian Authorities sent instructions to the Island executive not to take any further proceedings in the matter.



PAPUAN NATIVES, THE WOMAN IN MOURNING.

[Facing page 164.]



TRADING CANOE, SANTA CRUZ.

[Facing page 165.]

little indulgence in their homicidal propensities, he took the dreaded sorcerer from out of their midst, and landed him on Rapa, where he was given employment. But neither that precaution on the part of the trader, nor the supernatural powers supposed to be possessed by the suspected one, availed him much. He was doomed, and now his place knows him no more.

Norman naturally objected to being thus summarily deprived of the labour of a man who had been recruited at considerable cost. He decided, accordingly, to investigate the matter; though he had little hope of success in locating the parties responsible for the man's death. With this purpose in view, we lost no time in making for the extensive Wana Wana lagoon, in which are Rapa and Samurai, two of the almost innumerable, small, wooded islands with which those beautiful waters are studded.

Upon reaching Samurai just before sundown, Norman sent word to his Malaita men that he wanted them all on board the launch. They soon appeared alongside, when, after a few inquiries as to how they were getting along with their clearing, he suddenly "fired" at them the question:

"Why you damned fellow kill that fellow Gama?" or some name like that.

Instead of being disconcerted or indignant, as might reasonably have been expected, at being charged with so grave an offence, they did not even deny the soft impeachment. On the contrary, they appeared to view the accusation as a compliment. The "boss" boy, with a shrug of his shoulders, laughed quite heartily, as did all his companions. And by no questioning on the part of the trader could he obtain any satisfaction as to why the unfortunate Gama had been killed or any particulars of the murder, I am satisfied that they were all implicated in a more or less degree.

While Norman was interrogating them, I suddenly remembered that he had previously told me these men had amongst them a fine specimen of Malaita club. I therefore asked him to send for it. When, later, the weapon was brought on board, Norman, while examining the club, noticed some dark stains on the sharpened side of its head.

Turning to them he asked · “ This all same club you fellows kill Gama ? ”

This query evidently impressed them greatly. They considered it an exhibition of the trader's astuteness, and, by their behaviour, showed unmistakeably that he was correct in his surmise. After a little bargaining, I was fortunate enough to secure this fine weapon, valuable in itself, independently of the gruesome associations attached to it.

This Malaita native is an unique specimen of humanity. He is ferocious, and sometimes cruel ; yet one cannot help liking him, notwithstanding his occasional, even frequent, wanderings from the paths of righteousness. He is a genial murderer. Hatred or malice towards his victims does not enter into his composition. Killing with him is merely a form of diversion, on a par with chewing betel nut, and indulging in feasts. Moreover, he is brave, and not nearly so treacherous as the other Islanders of the group.

Laziness is unknown to him, for which reason he is highly valued by the white community as a labourer. His honesty and trustworthiness in business matters are proverbial, so that, on the whole, he is possessed of many compensating traits of character to set off against his bloodthirstiness.

As for Malaita, the state of affairs existing on that island is a standing disgrace to the Protectorate Government. Notwithstanding its proximity to Tulagi, the seat of administration, from which island it is visible, nothing has been attempted towards

civilising the natives or bringing them under subjection. They are in the same savage condition as when first visited by the Spaniard, Mendano.

Head-hunting expeditions are common, internecine war between the different tribes is the perennial state, and the bodies of prisoners taken in battle furnish food for cannibal orgies.

No peaceable intercourse exists between bush dweller and the coast inhabitants, except upon stated occasions, when they meet upon neutral ground for the purpose of bartering vegetable products for the spoils of the sea. On these market days, the women, who do the trading, are protected by armed warriors belonging to their respective tribes, who stand apart, ever alert for any signs of hostility or treachery.

As regards the few traders who have settled upon the island, they are practical prisoners within their pallisaded compounds, which no native is allowed to enter on any consideration, without first being disarmed.

As an illustration of how little the inhabitants can be trusted, the Government regulations with respect to "recruiting" labour provide that, in every instance, the recruiting boat shall be continually kept with its stern towards the shore, and must be protected by a covering vessel manned with an armed crew. Neglect of these precautions would inevitably lead to a massacre of all hands engaged in the operations.

There is only one instance on record in which the Malaita natives spared a white man, when they had him at their mercy.

Some twelve years ago, the trading schooner, "Bob-tailed Nag," put into a lagoon inside the small island of Manobo, off the north east coast of Malaita. The anchor was scarcely down when a native appeared alongside in a canoe. Upon accepting an invitation to come on board, he was found to be the bearer of a

letter, which he handed to the captain. The writing was almost unreadable, but, when deciphered, was found to purport to come from a white man. It was to the effect that he wanted the captain to send a boat ashore for him, at a certain hour after dark, to a place on the beach designated by him.

The skipper, who had never heard of a resident European on this very dangerous part of Malaita, was at first inclined to believe that the letter had been written by a native endowed with some little mission education ; also, that it was merely a ruse on the part of the islanders, who were credited with being the most treacherous on that coast, to get him to send a boat ashore, with an unsuspecting crew, whom they could at once proceed to massacre. But, upon closely questioning the bearer of the message, the captain was forced to the conclusion that the letter was a *bona fide* request for aid from a captive European. Therefore, having first taken every possible precaution against treachery, he dispatched a boat, at the appointed hour. Upon its return, there was seen to be seated in the stern sheets a passenger, who, on reaching the deck, proved to be a white man, perfectly nude, and almost unable to express himself in the English language. His story was a truly remarkable one.

About eleven years previously—as near as he could estimate—when a mere boy, he, with two sailors belonging to a vessel, loading guano at Malden Island, became enamoured of island life. They decided, therefore, to provision the long boat, then to steal away at night, and make for the West, trusting to luck to bring them to one of the numerous islands that, by the chart, they saw studding the ocean in that direction. They were quite unaware of the fact that these islands are mostly uninhabited coral attols—waterless, and, in many cases, devoid of any vegetation.

For about a month, without sighting land, they

sailed over the loneliest part of the South Pacific, until their provisions, which from the start were comparatively scanty, commenced to give out. The water beakers they replenished from the passing showers that are so frequent near the Equator. When death from starvation began to stare them in the face, several sharks fortunately appeared on the scene, and followed the boat. Having no hooks nor tackle sufficiently strong to hold a fish of that size, they were obliged to resort to an ingenious stratagem, in order to entice the sharks alongside. Jack Renton, as the boy was called, dangled his legs in the water over the side of the boat, and, when the fish made a rush for them, it was immediately impaled by his companions, with boat-hooks held ready for the anticipated onslaught. Truly, a unique mode of fishing. It was very successful, however, and they were consequently enabled to re-stock their sadly depleted larder.

Eventually, to their delight, land was sighted, after a voyage of at least fifty days, as nearly as could be estimated. But, if the poor wretches could only have foreseen the fate that awaited castaways upon that benighted shore, surely, rather than land there they would have continued to brave the terrors of the ocean.

Upon sailing round a small island, they found themselves in a lagoon upon the farther shore of which their boat was beached. Almost immediately they were surrounded by a host of armed savages, who, with yells of exultation, quickly dispatched Renton's companions, whose bodies, to his horror, were at once conveyed to the ovens, and, when cooked, were eaten before his very eyes.

Renton's youthful appearance saved his life. He became, by adoption, the son of the then all-powerful Chief, Kabowa, who was childless, and who, moreover, treated him with the greatest kindness.

Later he discovered that they had reached Malaita, in the Solomon group, so that the boat had made the remarkable voyage of over twenty-five hundred miles.

Renton eventually became one of Kabowa's noted warriors, taking part in all that Chief's battles with neighbouring tribes. Nevertheless, he was always on the look-out for a chance to get away, so that his feelings of delight may be imagined, when he found himself on board the "Bob-tailed Nag," back again amongst men of his own race and nationality.

From the Wana Wana lagoon we went over to Kolombangra, where several days were spent in visiting different villages. At one of these places, on the off-chance that their might be some ancient weapons lying round, I asked Norman to enquire from the head man whether he knew of any stone axes in that vicinity. His reply was that he had none, but that a man in a distant village knew the whereabouts of quite a number. It seemed that this individual had discovered a "cachet" of them, under the upturned roots of a large tree, which had recently been blown down. One of these he took home, intending to use it for some domestic purpose. That night he was taken suddenly ill, and as, amongst the natives, no sickness is ever associated with natural causes, it was concluded by him that his trouble must be ascribed to the removal of the axe from its resting place. The weapons belonged, without doubt, to a "tambo" devil, who chose that mode of showing resentment at being deprived of his property. A consultation was held, thereupon, with the village wiseacres, when they decided that it would be advisable to rid the neighbourhood of such dangerous articles by removing them to a distant isle, which was accordingly done without any delay.

This was, in effect, the story told to Norman by

the Chief. We decided, therefore, to make for the village where the sacrilegious one lived, in the hope of discovering where the axes had been deposited. Upon arriving there we were fortunate enough to find him at home. He confirmed the head man's story, and agreed to show us the spot to which the weapons had been removed. This proved to be a little, lonely isle, away off the coast of Kolombangra. Our guide and I at once went ashore, when he led me to a small "tambo" house, where I found twenty-three stone axes, of different sizes and in various stages of finish. As he did not appear to have any objections to them being appropriated by me, I annexed the whole lot. He took good care, however, not to be in any way a party to the spoliation; and I had to convey them all on board the launch myself.

Moreover, I am satisfied, by his manner after we left the shrine, that he was chuckling to himself over the happy time I would inevitably have with the "tambo" devil, when settling with that gentleman for the theft of his property.

My idea is that these axes constituted the stock-in-trade of an ancient artisan, whose business probably was brought to a sudden end by some disaster that overtook the community. They were discovered in a locality which, in the distant past, might easily have been overwhelmed by an eruption of the now extinct volcano of Kolombangra. In that case they are very interesting relics of a bygone people.

Upon returning to Gizo, I found that the "Moresby," west-bound for Papua, was expected at any day. I decided, therefore, to take up my abode on the adjacent island of Loga, and await her arrival there.

Next day, however, without the slightest premonitory symptoms, I was stricken down with a bad attack of malaria. For two days I was completely delirious, after which the fever commenced to abate, and in a

short time I was all right again. As a rule the new-comer to these islands enjoys immunity from fever for the space of a year; but it would have been a miracle, indeed, if I had escaped, considering the manner of life I had led since my arrival in the group. No doubt I contracted the fever through exposing myself unavoidably to the malarial mosquito, while curio-hunting in the native villages in which frequently I had to pass the night. Some of these were so far distant from Lambetta that it was impossible to visit them and return in one day, so that I was very often obliged to content myself with what accommodation the natives had to offer. This constituted, in some instances, of a mat, spread on the ground inside a village hut, with no protection against the ubiquitous mosquito, who had therefore every opportunity of "getting in its fine work."

In due course the "Moresby" came along, when I regretfully bid good-bye to the Solomon Islands, where I had put in a good time of nearly six months. Pleasant memories of the thoughtful and generous hospitality received at the hands of the trading community are indelibly impressed upon my mind, as well as of the wild life led by me while in the group, which, though rough and, at times, not without danger, had still a charm and fascination to one possessed of the "wander fever."

On her way west, the "Moresby" called in at Faisi, one of the Shortland Islands, the Government headquarters of the western portion of the Protectorate. Embodied in the august person of the youth in charge of this extensive district, are the positions of Assistant Commissioner, District Magistrate, and Postmaster, not one of which—let alone all the three—is he fitted to fill. His arrogance is colossal, and equalled only by the ignorance he displays of all matters connected with administration. His abilities, indeed,



LARGE TRADING CANOE, BRITISH PAPUA.

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CLUNN'S PLANTATION HOUSE, SHEWING CLUNN AND HIS "BOYS."

are such as might qualify him, in a civilised community, to hold a junior clerkship in some mercantile business. It is not surprising, therefore, that in his district he is thoroughly disliked, and looked upon with contempt. No wonder that the Government of the Protectorate exists only in name, when, through influence, youths of his calibre are "pitch-forked" into the highest positions.

Some few from miles Faisi is a village, perhaps the largest of any in the group. Through the courtesy of Burns, Philp and Company's manager, I was enabled to visit it. The inhabitants are of a coal-black type, and, though of good physique, have not as fine features as those of the New Georgian native. Some of the houses in this village are of immense size, and, while neatly constructed, have only mud floors, as is usual in the Solomon Islands.

The Chief is a very old man—a brother of the celebrated Gora—who, when alive, exercised an unlimited authority over all this portion of the group. To the time of his death he remained the faithful friend of Europeans, many of whom he saved from attack by his tribesmen, in that way rendering valuable services to the comparatively few white men then resident in these islands.

Woodlark, the "Moresby's" next port of call, after leaving Faisi, is a large island off the S.E. coast of New Guinea. It is the scene of considerable gold mining operations, which, however, from what I could learn, have not, so far, been of a very profitable character.

The shafts leading to two of these mines are situated about half-way up the side of a considerable eminence, some three miles from the landing, and have been sunk to a considerable depth. I think the hottest walk I ever experienced was along the path leading to this hill. It is constructed through an extensive swamp

of mud and mangroves, the breeding place of myriads of mosquitoes and other tropical pests. Not a breath of wind penetrates through the dense jungle undergrowth, while a fœtid exhalation from the foul and stagnant water lies, like an enveloping pall, over this noisome scene, through which the pedestrian has to wind his weary way with absolutely no protection from the fierce rays of a tropic sun beating down upon his devoted head.

With the exception of a fine view from the top of the hill, there is nothing to repay a visitor for the discomforts of his journey through these swampy lowlands. On a plateau overlooking the sea are the Government buildings, where a few officials pass an isolated existence, subject to frequent attacks of malaria, for which the district is noted. To my mind, a term of imprisonment in a good-sized penitentiary would afford more pleasure than to waste one's life in a place so ghastly as this appears to be. No excitement of any kind, absolutely no event ever happens to relieve the terrible monotony, and all are dependent entirely upon the monthly steamer for communication with the outside world. It is, indeed, a marvel how men can be induced to accept employment under such conditions as these, which prevail generally at most of the outposts of our great Empire.

Two days' sail from Woodlark Island brought us to Samuraim, where I disembarked from the "Moresby," with the intention of taking the German boat for Sydney. She was expected to call in about a month's time.

CHAPTER XVI

BRITISH PAPUA—ADMINISTRATION OF—THE NATIVES
—SUPERSTITIONS — WITCHCRAFT — CANNIBALISM
—PUNITIVE EXPEDITIONS — FAUNA — FLORA

NEW GUINEA, one of the largest islands in the world, is divided into Dutch, German, and British territories. The latter, recently christened Papua, is a colony of the Australian Commonwealth, and contains 90,000 square miles. The population comprises, it is estimated, half a million natives, and 700 whites. The Governor, an appointee of the Federal Administration, is assisted by a Legislative Council composed of six official and three non-official members. The latter are appointed by the Governor as representatives of the commercial, mining, and planting interests from which they are respectively chosen.

From my own observations, together with what I could gather, the vast responsibilities and difficulties incidental to the proper government of this extensive territory, with its large and barbarous population, are being successfully grappled with by its Australian administrators.

The welfare of the native is strictly safeguarded, while he, on the other hand, is being brought to understand that breaches of the law cannot be committed by him with impunity.

Roads are being constructed as quickly as the finances will allow; hospitals have been established in all the different districts, and placed in charge of medical officers, who have made the treatment of tropical diseases a special study.

In fact I heard no complaints whatever against the manner in which the Government was administering its trust. The white population was receiving good value in return for its contributions to the territory's exchequer.

What a striking contrast is this to the disgraceful state of affairs existing in the adjacent Solomon Islands, under practically like conditions? There is not the slightest doubt that the only salvation for that group is to take it out of the hands of the band of incompetents now in charge, and hand the islands over to Australian administration. In that event the white man and native would be under a government deserving of their respect and support.

The inhabitants of New Guinea are divided into a number of tribes, with no homogeneity either in respect to language or customs. Generally speaking, however, they are of the light-complexioned, Papuan type, cheerful and light-hearted, thus differing from their black, sullen Solomon Island brethren. The Papuan is a merry savage, always ready to laugh and joke. I could not help remarking the difference between a Solomon Island and New Guinea village. In one a visitor might easily imagine that some dire disaster had lately overtaken the community, so depressed did they appear to be, while, in the other, everybody appeared happy, the older people laughing and joking, and the children skylarking all over the place.

The Papuan is also very particular about keeping his village clean, leaving nothing to be desired in that respect. He is assisted in this by the architectural style of his dwellings, which are elevated on posts some six feet from the ground, thus enabling him to do most of the cooking outside, but underneath, his house. Open spaces are invariably kept scrupulously free from all refuse. But—most important point of all—pigs are confined, as a rule, in styes on the village



SMALL CANOE, BRITISH PAPUA.



SAMURAI, BRITISH PAPUA.



FERRY CANOE, MILNE BAY, BRITISH PAPUA.

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PAPUAN VILLAGE.



TATANI VILLAGE, BRITISH PAPUA.



CREW OF FERRY CANOE, BRITISH PAPUA.

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outskirts. These remarks apply particularly to those villages I visited throughout that portion of New Guinea in which Samurai is situated, but I am informed that the same conditions exist in most Papuan villages.

The Papuan is of good physique, and, so far as the men are concerned, does not trouble to hide his well-built form from the light of day. Their costume is principally of an ornamental character. The fair sex, on the contrary, are accustomed to wear a surfeit of clothing, known as "reedies," or petticoats made from grass. I witnessed on one occasion the disrobing of a lady, when, to my astonishment, she discarded no less than five of these dresses. The accompanying photo will give an idea of the appearance of a Papuan woman in full dress costume.

The New Guinea native, though sometimes treacherous, and very often cruel, is by no means a coward. Chief Kauri, of Kauri village, in the Purari Delta, who died recently, showed conclusively on a notable occasion that both he and his people were endowed with plenty of courage when necessity required it. Preparatory to attacking this Chief, Sir W. McGregor, who was at that time Administrator of the territory, sent word that he wanted to see him. In describing the interview, Sir William says :

"About 9 a.m. a man came to say that Kauri, the principal Chief, was coming to see me, and bringing a pig. I said I would see him. He soon arrived, with some fifty powerful men. He is a big, dark, middle-aged man, wonderfully cool and collected for a Papuan. I told him how his people had plundered us, but that I would accept his pig and give him a large axe for it, so that he and his people could see they could obtain them without stealing. I added, though I took his pig, and gave him an axe, it did not mean peace unless he restored the axes they had taken, but this sedate Chief was a singularly honest thief. Not only

did he decline to say that he would return them, but, contrary to all precedent, he would not even pretend to send to look for them, or make any enquiry whatever regarding them. Again and again I warned him that if he did nothing at all, he would have to fight. He continued to chew his betel nut with the utmost complacency. Only one thing seemed to affect him in any way. I said, I suppose he meant to take all my axes, knives, and other things, also that they were many. His eyes twinkled at the announcement. I had already ostentatiously loaded my Winchester and revolver, parading the number of cartridges in each. I made others of the party do the same, and I assured the Chief that our guns were all loaded and ready. I said to him that I would fire on the first man carrying a bow and arrows. To that he did not reply, except by his face, which said quite plainly, 'Who is afraid?' As he was preparing to go, I said to him that as apparently he was determined to fight, he might as well get the Karopaiairu people to help him as I might conveniently fight both. As he rose he said with perfect self-possession and Lacedæmonian brevity, 'It is much. They are here.' That, of course, I already knew, as I had seen some of them. The fight eventually came off, and he was conspicuous at his post, while none of his people had need to be ashamed of their behaviour that day."

In common with all savage races, the Papuan is a slave to the belief in sorcery. The village sorcerer is very often quite on a par with the Chief as regards power and influence. All bodily afflictions are ascribed to being "pouri pouried," so that relief can only be obtained at the hands of the sorcerer. He is also consulted on every matter about which any doubt exists.

For instance, if a man has a relative or friend murdered, and is unable to trace the guilty party,

he proceeds to a sorcerer, and states his trouble. The latter, thereupon, makes a collection of about a dozen leaves, of various descriptions, taken from the bush, and, with the soles of his feet, and a little water, works them up into a ball. This he then places in the sun, for about half an hour, to dry. Afterwards he places inside these leaves a live, black ant, together with the head of a black slug, the body of which is from four to six inches in length, and to be found nearly all over Papua. The natives are very afraid of it, on account of its ability to discharge for some distance a peculiar fluid, which, if it reaches the eye, is said to cause blindness. The sorcerer then takes the ball in the palm of his left hand, and closes his fingers upon it, when the people gather round, and ask, "Was it so-and-so, who killed so-and-so?" Almost everyone's name is called out, sometimes over and over again. This goes on for a considerable time, during which the sorcerer works the fingers and muscles of his arm, causing the latter to contract, apparently with the result that, in time, the arm becomes stiff and painful. Upon this stage being reached, he moans, and, when at length the fingers slowly open and the ball is thrown aside, the name mentioned at that particular time is that of the guilty party.

Of course, there can be no doubt that the sorcerer allows the leaves to fall from his hand upon the name being called of someone against whom he has a grudge.

Cannibalism is prevalent, in a more or less degree, amongst the different tribes, notwithstanding all the efforts of the authorities to stamp it out. The following are the particulars of a recent case, and an account of the steps taken by the District Magistrate to apprehend and punish those implicated in the murders.

An inoffensive Baroi man, with his two wives, paid a visit to the village of the Vanicuri people. Unfortunately for them, two new canoes had just been com-

pleted, to consecrate which, the blood of human beings was required. They were therefore murdered, and their bodies cooked and eaten. The whole village appeared to have taken part in both the murders and cannibalism, acting under the commands of the three Ravis, and the district sorcerer, Bai. As soon as the affair was reported to the authorities, a patrol was detailed to arrest the offenders.

Upon the arrival of the patrol officer at the village, the inhabitants made a wild dash for their canoes. The officer eventually persuaded the women and children to return, some of whom were utilised as messengers to the men, assuring them that the government meant no harm to the innocent, and wanted only the men directly implicated in the murders. No reply was received, and, during the day, the women and children again left, by order of the Chief Komara, who sent word that he intended to attack the government forces that night. Preparations were accordingly made to repel any assault. A strong guard was fixed, and scouts thrown out. At about two in the morning the enemy was reported to be advancing, and the building, in which the officer and his men were camping, was silently surrounded. Thereupon the natives were called upon to disperse, which they did, without firing an arrow. They evidently expected to find the government party unprepared, in which case there would have been another cannibalistic orgy.

Seeing that it was impossible to secure the men he wanted, the patrol officer decided to leave, and return in a few days. This he successfully did, surprising the village and capturing thirteen warriors, including Avai, one of the murderers. This man made a desperate resistance, firing a number of arrows at the police, before they captured him. While being taken to the boat, he threw himself into the water, handcuffed though he was, and began to swim to the bank of



NEW GUINEA NATIVES IN FULL DRESS.

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INDIGENOUS HOUSE AT SAPIRA, BRITISH PAPUA

the creek. One of the constables, a native corporal, jumped after him, and, following a severe struggle in the water, held him securely, until they were both picked up. This Avai bore a notoriously bad character. He boasted that he had killed one of the women, and had eaten part of her abdomen, also that he cooked her in front of one of the Ravis. When arrested, he had in his possession one of the woman's thumbs.

Eventually, after following the natives up the creek to their refuge village, four of the most powerful chiefs, and another of the murderers were captured.

The businesslike method in which this affair was managed by a force consisting of a white officer, with a few native police, and the satisfactory results obtained, is in striking contrast to the terrible bungling of the Solomon Island Government, in the conduct of their so-called punitive raids upon native villages, in which almost the only result was the shedding of innocent blood.

At Russell Island, off the New Guinea coast, the killing of the victim is reported to be accomplished in a peculiar manner. When a man is selected, a party of four is made up to dispatch him. They enter his house at night, when one secures his legs, another holds his hands, a third grasps the victim's throat to prevent him calling out, while the fourth breaks two or three of his ribs. It appears that, in most instances, the trachea or gullet is so badly injured by the rough treatment it receives, through the struggling of the unfortunate wretch, that he complains of violent pains in his throat, until relieved by death. The murderers do not attempt anything beyond this, apparently being quite satisfied that their victim must die, which he usually does the next day. The man, in the meantime, suffers great pain, and is unable to take any food. The lungs are said to be injured through the broken points of the ribs being pressed into them.

Upon the death of the victim, the body is at once carved up, and cooked, when it is distributed throughout the village.

The Government is doing everything in its power to suppress cannibalism, by appointing in each village a native constable, whose duty it is to report all cases, as well as to preserve order. When any instances are reported, no expense or trouble is spared to bring the guilty ones to justice, so that, in a few years, the consumption of human flesh should be a thing of the past in British Papua.

Between the northern coast of Australia and New Guinea there are a number of Islands, the remains of a land connection that existed until a comparatively recent geologic period. As might be expected, therefore, the fauna of the two countries bear a close resemblance to each other. The animals are principally of the primitive, marsupial type, and that still more ancient one, the egg-laying monotreme. These latter are only to be found in Tasmania, Australia, and Papua.

The indigenous mammals consist of the kangaroo, wallaby, opossum, flying fox, squirrel, field rat, and the echidna. Wild pigs and dogs are very numerous, but there is little doubt that man brought both of them with him, when he first arrived in this part of the globe.

Crocodiles, in large numbers, frequent the estuaries of rivers and the extensive swamps adjoining.

Several varieties of turtle are common all along the coast, while tortoises are to be found in the larger rivers.

Venomous snakes such as the black and whip, are numerous, as well as the deadly death adder, while large pythons are common, often being found of a length of twenty feet.

The gorgeously plumed bird of paradise, in a number

of varieties, has its home in New Guinea, which is also the habitation of the beautiful Goura pigeon, a bird of about the size of our domestic fowl.

These birds would very soon have been exterminated on account of the demand for their plumage, if it had not been for the action taken in the matter by the British Papuan Government. They are now stringently protected, a heavy penalty being inflicted for shooting or snaring either of them.

Cassowarys are common, as is also the scrub turkey, or bush hen, as it is sometimes called. These fowls lay their eggs in a common nest or mound, composed of earth and vegetable matter, and are left to be hatched out by the heat generated by the decomposition of the accumulated debris. The chicks receive no maternal care, but are quite capable of looking after themselves as soon as they emerge into the light of day.

The flora is of the usual tropical character. Oranges, bananas, the pineapple, and passion fruit all grow wild in the greatest profusion, while the ubiquitous cocoa-nut is very much in evidence.

CHAPTER XVII

NEW GUINEA—SAMURAI—THE MALARIAL MOSQUITO—
MILNE BAY—CLUNN'S PLANTATION—CURIO COL-
LECTING—NATIVE TRADING CANOES—THE BUSH
FOWL — FLASH-LIGHT PHOTOGRAPHING —
CONSEQUENCES OF

SAMURAI, a beautiful little island about sixty-five acres in extent, situated off the south-east end of New Guinea, though not the seat of government, which is at Port Moresby, is the principal commercial centre of British Papua, besides being the chief station of the Melanesian Mission.

Until a comparatively recent date it consisted of a swamp, rising on one side to a small hill, and affording every facility for the malarial mosquito to breed in myriads. It is not surprising, therefore, that Samurai became a by-word for unhealthiness. In fact, it was simply a hot-bed of fever.

Much money had been expended, in the past, on attempts to drain the morass, with the view to improving the health conditions, but these efforts all proved futile and of no avail until the present District Medical Officer, Doctor Jones, appeared on the scene.

He had practiced his profession for some years in Cuba, the Southern States, and Central America, where he had made a life study of tropical diseases. He is, therefore, a specialist on malarial fevers, and it is due to his indefatigable labours that Samurai is to-day perfectly healthy for a European to live in.

It was at once determined by him that the swamp

must go at any cost ; and, as drainage had proved a failure, he decided to fill it up. For that purpose a portion of the hill was cut away and utilized. He then planted palms and tropical shrubs along the boulevards of the streets intersecting the reclaimed land, thereby creating a most pleasing landscape, where before there had been a deadly swamp. One path particularly attracts the visitor. It is known as the Croton Walk, from being lined on each side by a hedge of these gorgeously foliated plants.

The result of all these improvements is that the malarial mosquito has forsaken his old haunts on Samurai, and, in consequence, fever is now almost unknown amongst the permanent residents.

This malarial mosquito is unique in many ways. Though small, he is, indeed, mighty. No time is lost by him in getting in his fine work, nor does he emit any buzzing warning to his intended victim. Having decided upon an attack, he drops down, without any apology whatever, upon the exposed skin and immediately commences boring operations. While engaged in these, he stands on his head, and becomes so absorbed in his work that he is oblivious to all danger ; consequently one has no difficulty in obtaining the satisfaction of bringing his existence to a sudden and untimely end ; but not always before the victim has had introduced to him the bacillus that, later, becomes the cause of all the fever troubles.

A couple of weeks having been passed pleasantly at Samurai, in visiting the numerous native villages along the shore of the mainland, Mr. Clunn, in whose comfortable hostelry I had been staying, kindly invited me to accompany him to his plantation at Milne Bay, a deep indentation into the New Guinea coast, about twenty-five miles from Samurai.

A five hours' sail, before a fine fair wind, brought us to the little river, near the mouth of which, upon a

high knoll, is his comfortable bungalow. He has a fine property of some twelve hundred acres, consisting principally of bench lands suitable for rubber planting, with quite an extensive area of low lying ground fronting the water. This latter is planted out with cocoa-nuts for which it is well adapted. Three years ago Mr. Clunn put in a few rubber trees, whose growth has been so remarkable that he intends, in the future, giving most of his attention to raising rubber.

There is no doubt that in a few years New Guinea will be a great rubber-producing country. Its potential capabilities in this respect are so great beyond question that there is no excuse for exaggeration. Yet, from the numerous prospectuses appearing in the Australian press, of rubber companies in the course of flotation, this is being done to an extent that borders upon fraud. The usual *modus operandi* is for one of the promoters to secure, at a reasonable figure, an option on a cocoa-nut plantation, not yet in a bearing stage. It is then disposed of to the embryo company, through a third party, at about three times its real value, when the lamb-like public are given an opportunity to invest in the shares. They are beguiled into doing so in many instances by statements of the most barefaced falsity, as to facts, as well as by ridiculous estimates of the profits that will be derived from the yield of copra, at once, and during the time the rubber trees are maturing. Some of these statements are so absolutely untrue that I anticipate considerable trouble ahead for a good many of the promoters, when the irate investor realises how badly he has been had.

From Clunn's plantation to the head of Milne Bay, about twenty miles distant, runs a good six-foot road skirting the shore most of the way. Being cut through a forest of giant tropical trees, whose foliage the sun seldom penetrates, it affords a most agreeably cool

and shady walk, even in the heat of the day.

One comes upon native villages at frequent intervals, so that I had no difficulty in seeing many phases of Papuan life during my stay at the plantation. I also secured a number of interesting articles.

On my first morning, after a walk of about two miles, I met a fine specimen of the native going in the opposite direction. He was dressed for killing—lady killing—with his face painted in what, I presume, to have been the most approved fashionable style. Finding that he could understand and speak a little English, I asked where I could get a drum and some fish spears. He replied :

“I tell you—you come long village b'long me.”

Then, without any more ado, he dropped amongst the bushes his load of cocoa-nuts, and voluntarily constituted himself my guide for the rest of the day.

I appreciated this action of his all the more when I discovered later that he was on the way to see his best girl, for whom the cocoa-nuts were a present. I, therefore, rewarded his temporary self-denial, when he left me in the evening, by presenting him with quite a few sticks of tobacco. He proved to be a very genial as well as an observant companion, drawing my attention to many things I might otherwise have easily overlooked, notably an enormous nest of the bush-fowl, built just off the trail, on the ground, and composed of earth and brush gathered together in the shape of a large mound. These nests I have described more fully in the previous chapter.

On another occasion I had a very amusing experience while taking a photo of the interior of a dwelling.

On account of the darkness prevailing in all native houses, I concluded that a flash-light would be necessary in order to obtain any satisfactory results. Having chosen my subject, therefore, in the shape of one of the largest huts in a village, near the plantation,

I proceeded to "round up", quite a concourse of natives, of both sexes and of all ages, whom with the aid of a few sticks of tobacco, I succeeded in grouping at one end of its interior. Then, by blocking them up with matting, I excluded as much as possible of the light that penetrated into the building through the doors, and, after focussing my camera, applied a match to the flash-light.

I certainly did not anticipate the panic that followed. The nervous system of one ancient savage, who was sitting on his haunches, near, and with his back towards, a door, received such a shock that he fell back against the matting, which, by giving way, precipitated him head over heels down the ladder on to the ground. How he escaped breaking his neck was a marvel. But apparently he received no injuries from his unceremonious mode of departure. When last I saw him he was making for cover, at a 2.30 gait, as though chased by the devil, whom, no doubt, he thought was close at his heels. Then an old dame, with a child in her arms, whom I had placed near the fire, was so overcome with fright that, regardless of consequences, she seated herself upon the glowing embers. Judging by her subsequent actions, the result must have been somewhat disconcerting, as might be supposed, when it is understood that her sole covering consisted of a loin cloth, her "reedie" having been discarded. Upon recovering her equilibrium, with a heart-rending yell, she made for a door, and reaching the ground in a flying leap, shewed, by her "sprinting" capabilities, that, though old in years, she still retained a portion of her youthful agility.

The rest of my subjects made their exit into the open as quickly as the capacity of the doors would allow, to the accompaniment of children's screams, and the fiendish barking of native curs. I do not know what they all thought of the proceedings; but to my



SCENE AT YULE ISLAND, NEW GUINEA.

[Facing page 188.



VILLAGE, MILNE BAY, BRITISH PAPUA. THE LARGE HOUSE IN WHICH THE AUTHOR

mind pandemonium had suddenly broken loose. Under the circumstances I considered it advisable to gather together my photographic paraphernalia, and proceed as quickly as possible, to another field of operations.

It may be stated that, for some unexplainable reason, the photo turned out an absolute failure, so that, in a sense, I had all my trouble for nothing, but as a set-off I had gained the unique experience of photography by flashlight in a Papuan village. It is needless to say that I did not again attempt to obtain a picture of the interior of a native dwelling.

Returning to the plantation from one of my daily excursions, I was fortunate enough to come across a large, New Guinea trading vessel lying at anchor up a small river. It consisted of three canoes, held firmly together by a bamboo platform, upon which was erected a large-sized house. Its length must have been at least forty feet, and yet I was informed that this was not considered a large specimen of its type.

The marvellous ornamentation lavished upon these vessels is of the most elaborate character—years must be spent in building and finishing them. No prettier picture can be imagined than that afforded by one of these graceful canoes, with its peculiar winged-shaped sails, gliding before the lightest breeze, over the many-coloured waters of a tropic sea.

They are strongly-constructed crafts—well fitted, therefore, at certain seasons of the year, to make the long trading voyages for which they are used. Some of the larger ones, I am informed, accommodate as many as fifty men and women, beside children.

These canoes are built by a tribe dwelling on the southern coast of New Guinea, for the purpose of enabling them to distribute the pottery they manufacture, which, on account of its well-known excellence, is in great demand by other tribes, who give in exchange yams, taro, sweet potatoes, and native apparel, con-

sisting chiefly of ornaments. Later on I was fortunate enough to obtain a very pretty model of one of them, with wing-shaped sails, quite a work of art.

After a ten days' stay at Clunn's plantation—an enjoyable and profitable visit, from a curio-hunting point of view—I returned to Samurai, where the "Moresby" was found lying alongside the wharf. Upon learning that there was some doubt as to whether the German steamer would call, I decided to return to Sydney by the way that I had come, that is back through the Solomon Islands, by the "Moresby." I therefore boarded her, and in due course reached Australia, after wandering for over a year amongst the beautiful islands of the Pacific. During that period I had visited the Society Group, the Cook Island Protectorate, the Solomons, and British Papua, thereby adding considerably to my knowledge of Polynesian and Papuan life, as well as enabling me to secure some very valuable acquisitions to my collection of curios.

APPENDIX

RECENT Australian advices report that considerable friction has arisen with the natives of the Northern portion of the Solomon Group, caused by the bigoted and high-handed methods of the missionaries in their treatment of the Islanders. In this connection the following extracts from the "Sydney Morning Herald" and the "Daily Sun" of January 10th, 1911, will be of interest.

"It leaked out a week ago that serious trouble was brewing in connection with the work and methods of a certain island missionary, and that he had been deported from the island on which he laboured, at the demand of the natives, the story being that they had threatened to kill him unless he were immediately removed.

"Now the definite statement is made that the Rev. Ernest E. Shackle, of the Methodist Mission, has been deported from Ontong Java, in the Northern Solomons, by order of the Resident Commissioner, Mr. Woodford, at the instigation of the natives. It is stated that the natives made allegations that Mr. Shackle had desecrated their temple and idols, and had resorted to flogging, and that to prevent trouble the Commissioner removed the missionary from the island. It appears that friction has existed for some time between the Rev. Ernest E. Shackle, of the Methodist Mission, and the natives, and had become so intense that the missionary had to be deported at the instance of Mr. Woodford, the Resident Commissioner, in order to save him from threatened murder. According to Mr. Wheatley, a well-known trader, the deportation was the result of a petition by the natives, but the

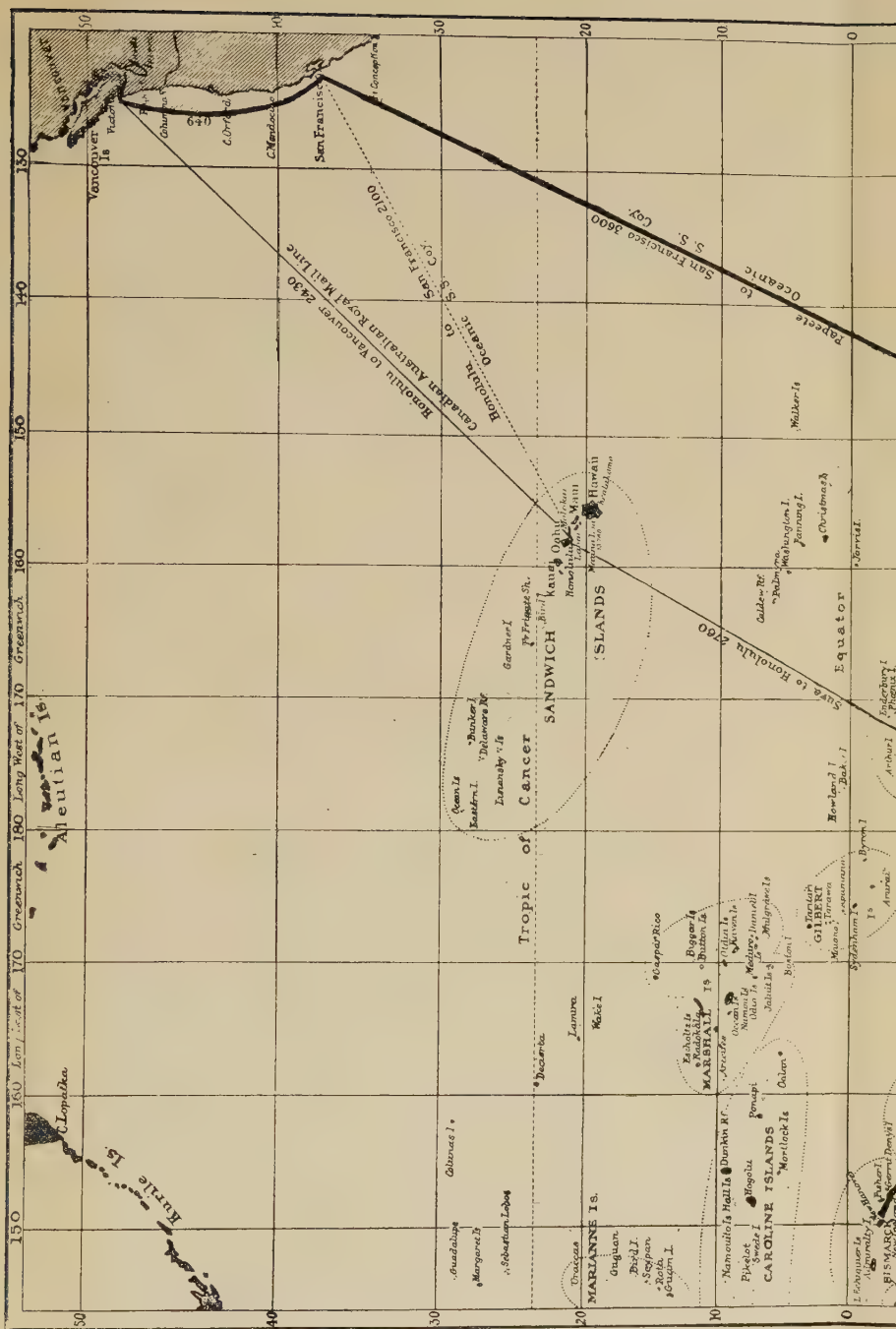
cause of the trouble is stated by Mr. Markham, manager at Liuniuwa for Messrs. Lever Brothers. That gentleman has reported that Mr. Shackle had attempted to interfere in the business of the traders, and also aroused the displeasure of King Kepea and the natives by his methods of dealing with them.

'Mr. Shackle,' so says Mr. Markham, "used to get about a dozen men together and march around the native temple beating a tin drum and singing hymns, and on one occasion the missionary began to chop down a big wooden idol and only desisted when menaced by the Islanders. Another serious allegation made against Mr. Shackle is that he flogged the natives."

STRANGE AND SAVAGE PEOPLE.

"Little is known of Ontong Java and its savage people, over whom reigns a king, Kepea by name, who wears a large bone ring through his nose. He it is who is said to have demanded the deportation of Mr. Shackle, their relations from the first having been anything but pleasant, it being stated that the King was very much incensed at the missionaries taking a portion of his land on which to erect a house and church without asking his permission. Ontong Java is, correctly speaking, a group of small islands—a circular formation of lands and reefs in an area of some fifty miles, and there are only two passages into the sheltered inside, while the outside is beaten upon by the open ocean, and is almost inaccessible. The principal place in Liuniuwa, and it is here that the mission station is located, and that Mr. Markham and a German trader named Schwarz have their stores. The steamer 'Upolu,' belonging to Lever Brothers, visits the place four times a year.

The Islands are divided into two divisions, the first being called Vahi-Koolau, the second Vahi-Keubu, and this division is for marriage purposes. When a man of Vahi-Koolau marries, he marries a woman of





Vahi-Keubu division. It is just so with a man of Vahi-Keubu, he must take a wife from Vahi-Koolau. Now, when the marriage party assemble upon the Town Square, then those of the other division abuse the bride or brides, saying, "Mahe i ko ko avaga i moe maua seai moe olua," the meaning of which is, "Take away your women of evil face."

Mr. Norman Wheatley, who is located on the Island of Gizo, and is a well-known trader in the Solomons, was the first to report the unsatisfactory state of affairs, and his statements were corroborated afterwards by two other traders—Mr. Markham (manager for Lever Brothers, Ontong Java) and Mr. Hoerler, of the Island of Nukamanu, or Tasman, thirty miles distant.

"I left Gizo," said Mr. Wheatley, "before the deportation is stated to have taken place. I heard about it coming over, but I was not at all surprised. The natives have been very restless for a long time, and they sent a petition to the resident Commissioner, Mr. Woodford, whose headquarters are at Tulagi, asking that a boat be sent to take the missionary away. I believe they would have killed him if he had been allowed to stay.

Mr. Woodford himself, I believe, went to Ontong Java in the Government vessel 'Belama,' and I think it was expected to reach there on December 21st to take Mr. Shackle away, and also two native teachers, one of whom is a Tongan and the other a Samoan. They were to be taken to the Island of Gizo, where I live. Gizo is the Western Government Station in the group, and they were to wait there until a missionary vessel 'Taudanga' arrived to take them away.

"The natives sent word to Mr. Woodford some months ago, complaining about Mr. Shackle, and he considered it so important that he went down their in Lever Brothers' new vessel, the 'Koboloco,' personally to enquire into the trouble.

"The traders in the islands, who have to pay for their licenses, have a serious grievance against the missionaries for alleged trading. The mission steamer 'Taudanga' is going round the islands trading all the time. The missionaries at the station are doing the same thing. If they don't always do it directly, they do it through somebody else. There was a firm down there that they used to tell the natives to send all their copra to, and do all their business with. They would get hold of the natives and tell them not to go to me, and not to go to certain others, but to go to the people I speak of.

"It became so bad that we had to send reports in about it, and I think the money for a trading license is now being demanded from them."

STATEMENT BY MR. MARKHAM.

Mr. Markham, manager at Liumiuwa for Lever Brothers, when questioned on the subject, explained that his store was situated quite close to the mission station.

"Mr. Shackle and I were friends," he said, "good friends, until he wanted to interfere with my business with the natives, wanting me to let him have the names of the natives who were my customers, the things they bought, and all that sort of thing. I said No; I am quite capable of keeping my own books and don't want any outside interference."

"The history of this mission station has been full of trouble. Five years ago a couple of native teachers were left in a whaleboat to find a landing for themselves—a Tongan and a Samoan, who had been trained as teachers in Fiji. The native didn't want them, and wouldn't let them land. They were knocking about, up and down the place, for two or three months before they got a landing, living chiefly on what they could get from the white traders. That was before I got there. Mr. Hoerler was there then, and he took

pity on them, and allowed them to stay with him for a time, until they got more friendly with the natives. But the natives never took to them. They didn't want them.

"The missionary schooner 'George Brown' went down there in May, 1909, and in the report which was supplied to the Sydney papers it was stated that 'these Fijians so won the hearts of the Ontong Javanese that when the 'George Brown' brought them away the islanders formed a solid human triangle, with the base on the shore, and the apex at the whaleboat in the surf, and over the shoulders of the 700 natives thus massed walked the missionaries, and when the boat pulled away there were loud wailing and much lamenting.' It is utter nonsense. Nothing of the kind took place. It has also been stated that Miss Nicholson was the first white lady to visit Ontong Java, but this is not so, as Mr. and Mrs. Jack London were there before that."

"When Mr. Shackle started there he found them all against him. He wanted to induce them to attend church and school, and couldn't. Of course, some went. He made a mistake in trying to include in the mission men 80 or 90 years of age. I said to him, 'Why don't you leave the old men alone, and confine yourself to the young people, who will grow up, and then help you as teachers?' King Kepea became very angry and told him to go away. Personally, I was afraid of some violence befalling him."

THE "DEVIL-DEVIL" HOUSE.

"He used to get about a dozen men and boys who joined his church to march round the native temple—the natives call it their 'devil-devil house'—which contained their idols of wood and stone, beating a tin drum and singing hymns. This only made the people more angry, and some of them wanted to march round Mr. Shackle's church beating a kerosine tin

and chanting their native songs. These people had grown up in their superstitious beliefs for centuries. A man of 90, or perhaps 100, is not going to give up in a day the beliefs he has cherished for a lifetime, and his worshipping of stone or wooden images."

"On one occasion Mr. Shackle started to chop down one of their big wooden idols—about nine or ten feet high—but after he had started on it with his axe the natives became so vicious looking that he had to stop."

"One day he borrowed my gun and shot a pig, which happened to belong to one of the natives. This also caused dissatisfaction."

"But the most serious allegation was flogging the natives. The natives alleged that they were flogged. One day a boy came to me and showed me big welts on his body, saying Mr. Shackle had flogged him. 'What did he flog you for?' I asked. 'Me dunno—no savee,' said the native. The King and the people sent a petition to the Resident Commissioner, Mr. Woodford, asking him to take Mr. Shackle away."

The "Daily Sun" comments on these missionary troubles as follows:—

MISSIONARY VERSUS TRADER.

Do the missionaries do good or harm? Or, if they do good, do they do more harm than they do good? That is a permanent topic of conversation in the Pacific Islands; and, generally speaking, it may be said that the whole commercial class and two-thirds of the official class vote against the missionaries. Outside missionary circles the Bible cannot be said to be a very popular book in the Islands, but there is one text that is exceedingly popular. It begins, "Ye compass land and sea to make one proselyte." That quotation, however, begs the question.

The trader says the missionaries spoil the natives; make them conceited and uppish. "You bad white

man ; Jesus not love you. Jesus love me, wash me in His blood, amen." Spoil them for work among the cocoanuts which make the copra which makes Sunlight soap. "Copra no got. Missa Snook say all good Kerristian go build church, three moon ; missionary house, one moon ; Jesus lover my soul bosom fly." There is nearly as keen competition among island traders nowadays as there is among Sydney traders, and there are not enough semi-civilized islands, tame natives, and island products to supply the demand.

Besides, the traders say the missionary is frequently arrogant, a man who would be king of his little savage community ; and if the trader doesn't knuckle down the missionary virtually excommunicates him. The traders say the missionary is sometimes a trader too, despite denials ; or he strives to acquire valuable land for a song ; or by persuasion or spiritual influence, or for trifling goods, he makes the natives hand over valuable collections of weapons and implements, heirlooms of the tribes, remnants of lost ancient arts, saleable sooner or later at very high prices to European museums for the exceeding profit of the missionary or his heirs. . . . For a hundred years the islands have fermented with the trader-missionary controversy. It used to be a standing dish in New Zealand in the early days, when the missionaries or their families were acquiring large tracts of lands from Maoris on the easiest terms, and the Rev. Thomas Kendall, grandfather of our Henry Kendall, went so far that the Rev. Samuel Marsden solemnly told him to go his wicked way and be a missionary no more.

THE END.

THROUGH TROPIC SEAS, By FRANK BURNETT.

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